

LIVING TRADITIONS

Volume 4 No.2

Tradition, History, Esotericism & Spirituality



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LIVING TRADITIONS

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The print and digital edition of Living Traditions is published four times a year and includes reviews from the website from the preceding period, expanded content, articles and features research and news.

Features, articles and news only appear in the digital and print editions.

Subjects of Interest

Some of subject areas we cover are: History, academic and alternative, Hinduism and Buddhism, Sufism, Traditionalism, Bhakti, Yoga, meditation, Magic, health, vegetarianism, animal issues, Daoism, Hermeticism, Alchemy,

Folklore, Comparative Religion, Sufism, Mysticism, Gnosticism, Greek Philosophy, Traditional Cultures, Mysticism, Christian Origins, Orthodox Christianity, Greek Philosophical Studies, Greek and Roman Cultures, British, Irish and Scottish Folk traditions, folk, ambient, pagan and apocalyptic music, Shamanism, Paganism, Rune and Viking Studies, Asatru, Goddess Studies, Prehistory, Sexuality, Eroticism, NLP, Psychology, political alternatives (the full range), alternative health and so forth.

Academic and Alternative

We like to include a balance of academic and alternative content, taking a critical but not cynical approach. Each issue will include a range of lead articles, features, discussion pieces and lots of reviews.

Our reviewers include academics and scholars as well as specialists in various fields covering most traditions. We also have a range of general reviewers.

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Welcome to Living Traditions

The second issue of Living Traditions continues from the vantage point of the Perennial Wisdom as expressed through Living Traditions while reviewing titles from a wide range of perspectives.

We have an interesting article on Fidus, Brand and Bluher names not well known today but who offered a very different approach to eroticism. We also cover the basis of the Traditional worldview and discuss the Psychological of Selves and look at the complex question Who am I ? The answer is not as simple as we may think.

We have a special series of feature reviews on Northern Shamanism and the works of Raven Kaldera, who is always challenging and controversial.

Continuing the Shamanism theme we also take a look at a range of Animal Magic titles by Lupa which cover Shamanism, Otherkin and Therianthropy.

Covering a wide range of subjects which also like to explore political alternatives including Radical Traditionalism and the Pagan Third Way and you will regularly find titles of this nature in our politics section.

Our politics reviews includes lots of food for thought including some impressive books by Troy Southgate and Tomislav Sunic, whose *Postmortem Report* is one of the more sobering assessments of the modern world I have read in some time, it also includes some excellent essays by Alain De Benoist. Personally I find Sunic and Benoist at the forefront of political thought in the current period.

Our magazine section is also slowly expanding with everything from politics to paganism, heathen thought to current affairs.

We have expanded our music section to include a range of titles which have a folk, apocalyptic folk, traditionalist and Runic resonance.

The Editor

Occult of Personality

Peering Behind the Veil

The Occult of Personality is a superb quality online site providing talks, lectures, interviews and more in an easy to download form. It includes a wide range of free downloads but also has a subscriptions service which is of exceptional value.

The Occult of Personality Membership Section has been designed to provide high-quality interviews, presentations, and guided meditations. This web site aims to take the journey of self-discovery to higher degrees. The diversity of content is what makes this service special. It offers such a wide coverage of modern magic, esotericism and spirituality that is a goldmine of content for the modern esotericist.

The site is run by Greg Kaminsky and has been going for five years so is well established and reliable. The content continues to grow each month and I am always surprised by what is on offer.

The subjects covered include, but aren't limited to, occultism, historical figures of the Western Esoteric Tradition, Qabalah, Hermetics, symbolism, Alchemy, meditation, Magick, Tarot, Astrology, Freemasonry, spirituality, mysticism, metaphysics, and consciousness.



Just some of the recent offerings include:

Path of the Red Goddess – a conversation with Peter and Alkistis of Scarlet Imprint

Esotericism in Early Pennsylvania: Preliminary Research into the Rosicrucian Connection

A recorded presentation about Ascended Masters and the Adept Tradition

Theurgy: Magic of the Initiates – a recorded lecture given by Dr. Paul Clark, Steward of the Fraternity of the Hidden Light

Timothy Hogan's Revelation of the Holy Grail

Thoughts on Freemasonry with Kevin Townley

Alchemical Meditation II

Talking 9/11 with Douglas Lain

A Lecture on Martinism

An exploration of the underground stream in Western esotericism with Rubaphilos Salfluère

The price of \$7.95 US per month is very reasonable for the quality of what is available. Every talk is thought provoking and stimulating.

They are also well recorded and very clear. At the same time you gain access to the full archive of the Occult of Personality site so you have a veritable library of lectures, interviews, talks and meditations. Many of the talks include links, pdf files and background information to further your studies.

<http://www.occultofpersonality.net>



Archaeologists Find Gateway to the Viking Empire

Spiegel Online (2010)

For a century, archeologists have been looking for a gate through a wall built by the Vikings in northern Europe. This summer, it was found. Researchers now believe the extensive barrier was built to protect an important trading route. Their attacks out of nowhere in rapid longboats have led many to call Vikings the inventors of the Blitzkrieg. "Like wild hornets," reads an ancient description, the Vikings would plunder monasteries and entire cities from Ireland to Spain. The fact that the Vikings, who have since found their place as droll comic book characters, were also avid masons is slightly less well known.

The proof can be seen in northern Germany, not far from the North Sea-Baltic Canal. There, one can marvel at a giant, 30-kilometer (19-mile) wall which runs through the entire state of Schleswig-Holstein. The massive construction, called the Danevirke -- "work of the Danes" -- is considered the largest earthwork in northern Europe.



Foxes use Earth's Magnetic Field

New Scientist 2011

Foxes seem to zero in on prey using Earth's magnetic field. They are the first animal thought to use the field to judge distance rather than just direction.

Hynek Burda of the University of Duisburg-Essen in Essen, Germany, noticed that the foxes he was watching in the Czech Republic almost always jumped on their prey in a north-easterly direction. Given that cows position themselves using Earth's magnetic field, he wondered if something similar was at work.

Foxes jump high into the air before dropping onto prey. Burda's team found that when the foxes could see their prey they jumped from any direction but when prey were hidden, they almost always jumped north-east. Such attacks

were successful 72 per cent of the time, compared with 18 per cent of attacks in other directions.



All observers saw the same thing, but Burda remained baffled, until he spoke to John Phillips at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg. Phillips has suggested that animals might use Earth's magnetic field to measure distance.



Ten Reasons Aleister Crowley should be U.S. President in 2012

10. If you are fed up with the election process, for whatever reason, Aleister Crowley provides a more meaningful choice than Mickey Mouse, Cthulhu, or Jackie Broyles.

9. You can get a photo posted here — of yourself, your favorite hang-out, or anything else which includes an AC2012 poster, t-shirt or other propaganda that you can make yourself.

8. Looking for a way to stir up controversy at the next party you attend? Mention AC2012.com to a couple partisan voters and watch the sparks fly!

7. The campaign provides an easy way to change the subject when someone starts talking about the Mayan calendar or Terence McKenna.

6. Whether your aesthetic sense could be called goth or punk, and whether you are anarchist, communist, syndicalist, or fascist, our campaign image will match your wardrobe.

5. Since this campaign is a means to promulgate the Law of Thelema (thereby helping to establish your own freedom), supporting this campaign (whether you actually vote for Aleister Crowley or not) could reasonably be considered part of your True Will.



4. Help to overturn the ubiquitous slave morality of both Christianity and secular humanism.
3. Help to educate people who have only heard the tabloid journalism about Crowley propagated by the Spectacle.
2. Why settle for the lesser wickedness?
1. Aleister Crowley only needs 1% of the vote to send his message of liberty around the world.

Web: <http://ac2012.com/>

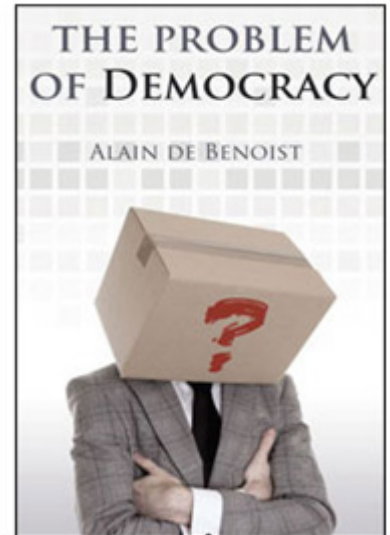


New Book from Aktos Publishing

The problem of Democracy by Alain de Benoist

The Problem of Democracy is the first of many translations of works by de Benoist to be published by Arktoś. In it, the renowned political philosopher and founder of the French 'New Right' (a label de Benoist rejects) discusses the

concept of democracy. Painting a picture of the history of popular rule in the West, he criticises the way in which the very term 'democracy' has been monopolised by ideological forces and economic structures having precious little to do with the people of a community actually ruling itself.



Arguing that true democracy also requires an actual people comprising a group of individuals with a common identity and history ruling itself – rather than a plethora of individual self-interests falsely abstracted into something altogether different from the collective will – he proposes fundamental alterations to the political systems of the West. He argues for self-determination, ethnogenesis and direct participation of the populace in the wielding of power.

Alain de Benoist is the leading thinker of the European 'New Right' movement, a school of political thought founded in France in 1968 with the establishment of GRECE (Research and Study Group for European Civilisation).

In 1978, he received the Grand Prix de l'Essai from the Académie Française for his book *Vu de droite* [View from the Right].

Editor of the journals *Nouvelle Ecole* and *Krisis*, his works have also been published in a variety of other journals such as *Mankind Quarterly*, *Telos*, *The Scorpion*, *The Occidental Quarterly* and *Tyr*.

Web: <http://www.arktos.com>



Kenneth Grant (1934-2011)

Kenneth Grant died on 15th January 2011 after a period of illness. Our condolences go first and foremost to his family, whose privacy is something which we all wish to respect at this difficult time.



Kenneth Grant had an extraordinary life, and his work has a remarkable depth and breadth of magical and mystical insight. In particular, his monumental series of Typhonian Trilogies is creative, innovatory and inspiring, extending across thirty years from the publication of the opening volume *The Magical Revival* in 1972, to the appearance of the final volume *The Ninth Arch* in 2002. This is a substantial body of work, constituting a solid foundation for further development, widening and deepening in the years to come; his work will continue.

Reprinted from Starfire Publishing



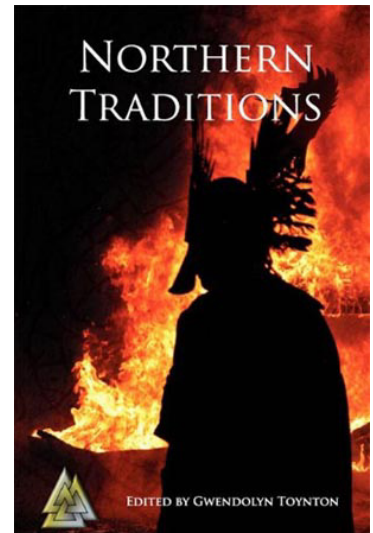
Northern Traditions

Primordial Traditions is pleased to announce that our second book, *Northern Traditions* (ed. Gwendolyn Toynton) is now available.

Northern Traditions is a collection of articles on the indigenous Pagan Traditions of Northern Europe. Authors include Matt Hajduk, Juleigh Howard-Hobson, Amy Johanna Ahlberg, Troy Southgate, S.R. Hardy, Christopher A. Smith, Stephen Borthwick, Vijay Prozak and Gwendolyn Toynton.

Content ranges from in-depth mythological studies and translations of texts through to ritual reconstruction. The book is divided into two sections, with one half containing Traditional and historic content. The second half of the book is dedicated to contemporary practice and issues relating to the spiritual practice of Northern Traditions in the modern era.

Topics dealt with include a detailed exegesis of *Völuspá*, examinations of key figures in the Northern mythos such as Odin, Forseti, Tyr and Loki, herbal and botanical uses of plants, ritual reconstruction and ideas for contemporary practice.



By combining academic level material with practical work the aim of the book is to take contemporary pagan practices to a new level where they can be accepted as a serious spiritual movement. Can be purchased via Amazon.

Web: <http://www.primordialtraditions.com>



Further Writings:

Essays on Philosophy, Religion, History and Politics by Troy Southgate

Amounting to thirty-five detailed chapters, Troy Southgate's latest offering explores some of the more intriguing aspects of human civilisation. From an in-depth study of history's prominent thinkers, ideologues and theologians right through to a dissection of the world's most fascinating empires, wars and revolutions, you will find this knowledgeable and erudite collection of essays both informative and thought-provoking.



£20 (UK), £22 (Europe) & £24 (America/Rest of World). All prices include postage and the Paypal address is: arktoslondon@yahoo.co.uk

Major Celtic Tomb Found

Scientists have discovered a 2,600 year-old aristocratic burial, likely of a Celtic noblewoman, at the hill fort site of Heuneburg in southern Germany. The discovery has been described as a “milestone” in the study of Celtic culture.



The dig leader and chief of the Baden-Württemberg State archaeology, Dirk Krausse, referred to the discovery as a “*milestone of archaeology*.”

One reason for the claim is likely the manner of excavation, which is new. In the past, such burial chambers have been dug up piece by piece locally, but now the team lifted the entire burial chamber, measuring four by five square metres (12 by 15 square feet) as one block of earth and placed it on a special truck to be transported to the State Office for the Preservation of Monuments in Stuttgart. The first results are only expected around June 2011.

Archnews 2011



Ken Russell eccentric filmmaker and actor will play Aleister Crowley in a short film from Imperium Pictures. Should be fun to see !



Another challenging new title from Arktos, *Why we Fight* by Guillaume Faye

The book contains a manifesto for European political action against liberalism, ethnic self-hatred and what Faye terms Islamic ‘colonisation’, as well as an ‘Ideological Dictionary’ of 177 key terms which he believes are essential for all members of the ‘European resistance’ to comprehend and adopt in their own approaches to the problems at hand. Faye argues for the creation of a ‘Eurosiberian Bloc’ - a new, federalist Europe based on traditional, anti-globalist values which will incorporate all nations from Ireland to the farthest reaches of Russia and make itself independent of American hegemony.

Faye also levels criticism against his former comrades from the European New Right, who he believes have retreated into the realm of pure theory and academic respectability.

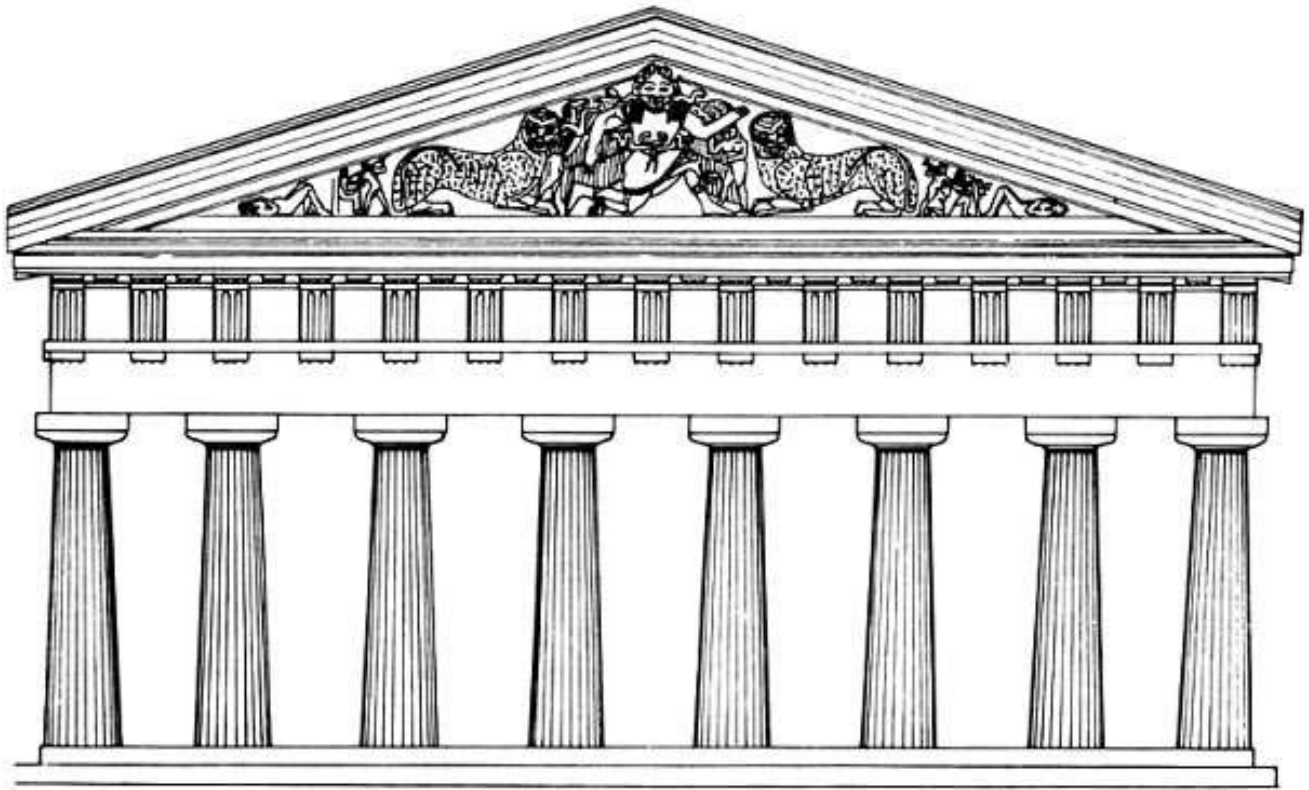
This edition was translated and an original Foreword was added by Michael O’Meara, the famed author of *New Culture*, *New Right*, the most extensive overview of the European New Right to appear in English to date. The book also includes additional material and a Foreword by Pierre Krebs, the chairman of Thule-Seminar, one of the most prominent New Right groups in Germany.

The publication of *Why We Fight* is a continuation of Arktos’ efforts to make the most important works of the thinkers of the European New Right tradition available to the English-speaking world. This, the most comprehensive presentation of Faye’s ideas to date, is certain to provide food for thought and provide a source for further debate within the fossilised Right and wherever alternatives to the present social order are being sought.

The softcover edition will be released on 28 April. The hardcover will be available from 5 May, but can be pre-ordered now. The book is 278 pages, with a stylish cover.

Web: <http://www.arktos.com>





THE CHARACTERISTICS OF TRADITION

The term Traditionalism evokes images of nostalgic visionaries looking back at time long past and hence is in many ways an unsuitable description. Today, often, the term Perennialism is used instead or in some branches of the Tradition, Radical Traditionalism. The reality is that Traditionalism of all shades is based on the engagement of the Perennial wisdom, the eternal gnosis, with the initiate in the modern world. While its core as an eternal principle may be immovable, its application is dynamic and active. Accordingly the Traditionalist does not look back but seeks to apply this eternal wisdom in the modern world and perhaps even bring about a counter revolution to return the modern world to its Traditional state.

There are many shades of Traditionalism from the contemplative focus of Rene Guenon and Frithjof Schuon to the paganism and apoliteia of Julius Evola. Many Radical Traditionalists follow a form of reconstructed Heathenism and these traditions can range from the Celtic and Anglo Saxon to the Germanic.

The first thing we need to do is try and define the basic characteristics of Traditionalism and this is not an easy thing to do. The key definition comes from a belief in the Sophia Perennis, an

eternal wisdom which exists beyond all forms of spiritual and tradition. It is not religion per se, but the source wisdom which is expressed, sometimes correctly, many times not, in the external forms of religious, esotericism, occultism and tradition.

This Perennial Wisdom is by its very nature a metaphysic beyond form and which manifests in various degrees of true, traditionally these are esoteric, mesoteric and exoteric. A key aspect of this manifestation is the cyclic nature of history, this can take many forms from the works of Julius Evola to Oswald Spengler and more commonly the Yuga system of the Vedas.

The Perennial Wisdom is expressed in its most pure form during the Satya Yuga, during this period esoteric, mesoteric and exoteric forms are aligned and cultural integrity is sustained. There is no such thing as religion as life is "integral", culture, heritage, spirituality and tradition are simply part of the everyday experience of the people. The society naturally coalesces into the various classes.

In the Treta Yuga divisions occur, the various forms of spirituality begin to break part, culture and spirituality being to separate and the eso-

teric and exoteric become different strands of knowledge. The integral nature of the culture becomes more formalized and takes the form of the four divisions of the functions of priest/royalty, military, merchant and worker of the land.

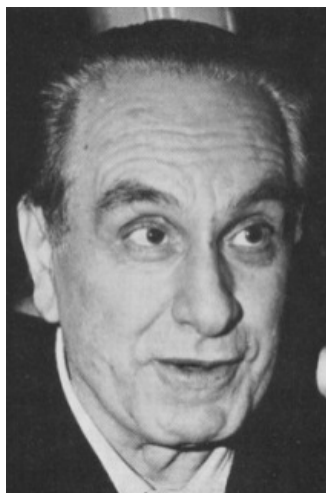
In the Dvapara Yuga the divisions between esoteric and exoteric become permanent, culture and spiritual become separate and the four divisions become reduced to castes with a loss of direct connection to the spiritual essence at its core.

The Kali Yuga, our present age, is the darkest period, the Age of the Wolf. Exotericism has become formal and hence the world's religions have little or no common to their original esoteric heart. Esotericism is hard to find and counter initiatic traditions abound.

So far our characteristics of Traditionalism including the Perennial Wisdom, the various levels of truth and a cycle view of history.

One of the major differences that arise is the relation between religions as an exoteric form and esotericism and the nature of the transmission of knowledge. Rene Guenon and Frithjof Schuon argue for the universality of the world's religions and the significance of the esotericism at their core. Guenon while accepting that the Vedic tradition continued to exist in the present age, felt that Islam (and Sufism) were the most credible living traditions for this period. He vacillated over the possibility of Freemasonry as a transmitting tradition but tended to reject Christianity as an valid form. Schuon accepted Christianity as a transmitting tradition and today most Traditionalists in this vein accept the majority of the world's major religions as possible gateways to the esoteric tradition.

Julius Evola was highly critical of the overemphasis on religious transmission and argued for a more active path.



Julius Evola



He emphasized the warrior monk rather than the contemplative. This is best illustrated in his work on Buddhism, *The Doctrine of Awakening*. Evola also emphasized the significance of Traditional political forms which seem somewhat underplayed within the Guenon form of Traditionalism. Ultimately Evola seems to sway towards accessing the esoteric path via the Western Mystery Tradition including the Pythagorean Mysteries, Roman Paganism, Alchemy and Hemiticism.

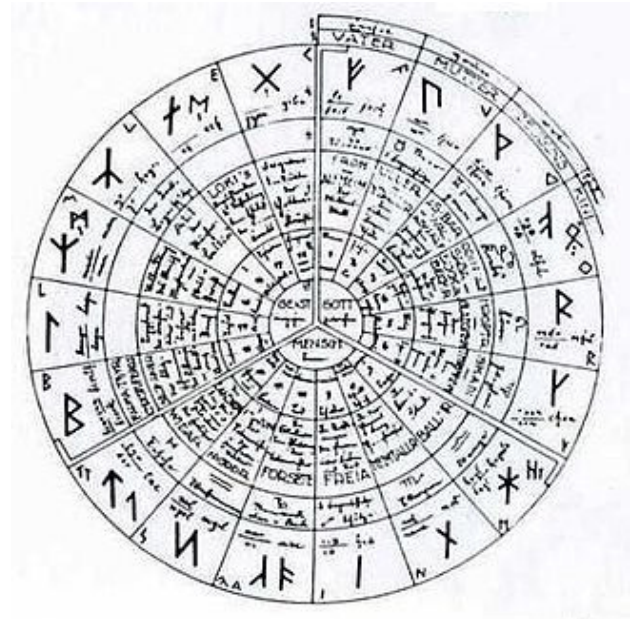
When it comes to politics Evola attempted on many occasions to engage with the possible transformation of the society around him via philosophical and esoteric means. Many counter revolutionaries took inspiration from his work for more direct action through armed struggle. In the end Evola developed the concept of *apoliteia*, whereby we accept that the society has sunk so far into the depths of the Kali Yuga that it is unlikely it cannot be returned to Traditional values and hence we must simply live accordingly to our own inner principles. Evola also describes this as "riding the tiger". The true individual or differentiated man should hold onto the tiger's back as tight as possible and ride through the Kali Yuga hence surviving its dissolution. This method, which is essentially tantric, can transform the destructive powers of the age into a form which can be utilized by the true man to achieve liberation.



After taking stock of the situation, this type can only feel disinterested and detached from everything that is "politics" today. His principle will become apoliteia, as it was in ancient times. Apoliteia refers essentially to the inner attitude.... The man in question recognizes, as I have said before, that ideas, motives, and goals worthy of the pledge of one's true being do not exist today.. "Apoliteia" is the inner distance unassailable by society and its "values"; it does not accept being bound by anything spiritual or moral. Once this is firm, the activities that in others would presuppose such bounds can be exercised in a different spirit.

Julius Evola

Another major variation which can be noticed between the approaches of Guenon and Evola is when it comes to morality. The religious and contemplative approaches of Traditionalism emphasize following the moral codes inherent within the exoteric religious the initiate has chosen. If an initiate chooses the Sufi path he will still adhere to the required practises of Islam and indeed seem to an outsider observer to be a devout Muslim even though he interprets his faith in a perennial manner. Within this ap-



proach the direct transmission of tradition is of greatest significance, while in the Evolian form of Traditionalism and Radical Traditionalism actions speak louder than words, so to speak. Evola offers a far more "active" path in which morality is in many ways conditional on action. He offers a warrior interpretation of Buddhism based on a union of contemplation and action and offers range of means to achieve liberation including the use of magick and Tantric sex. Evola's approach was strongly influenced by Friedrich Nietzsche but he argued that Nietzsche had only a limited understanding of the development of the Overman since he ignored the primary factor, the role of the transcendent. Radical Traditionalism is a more modern phenomenon but has its roots in the Volkisch movements of Germany in the late 18th century and early 19th. It is a significant Tradition which is often not considered specifically in terms of Traditionalism. There is much debate about the exact origins of the Runic revival. In the early 1900's Germany underwent an immense upheaval and such movements as the Life Form Movement (Lebensreform) and the Wandervogel emphasized a return to nature, health and a reassessment of old religious forms. This included a reawakening of interest in German mythology and the runes. One of the major figures involved in this revival was Guido Von List (October 5, 1848 – May 17, 1919). During 1902 List had undergone an operation for cataracts and for or eleven months his eyes were bandaged. In this state of darkness he claimed Odin communicated with him and gave him the se-

cret of the runes. While he had worked in the fields of German mysticism prior to this time, the revelation galvanized List and he began to produce a range of works including *The Secret of the Runes*. From this received gnosis List formed "The List Society" in 1908 which brought about a veritable revolution in the studies of runic wisdom and Germanic esotericism. He continued to write and publish works until 1914 when economics intervened. In 1911 he formed the Hoher Armanen-Orden (High Armanic Order) to work the runes within a truly initiatic setting. The order continued to meet and work through 1918 though records are scant, List died in 1919.

List's work triggered a Runic revival in Germany and while it was suppressed by the National Socialist government it still survived underground and after the war. In the 1930's in Australia the interest in German mysticism was taken up by Alexander Rud Mills (1885-1964). He published *Hael! Odin!*, in 1933 under the name Tasman Forth and in 1936 formed The Anglecyn Church of Odin. It is from Mills that Else Christensen (1913-2005) was introduced to Odinism and formed the Odinist Fellowship. Around the same time Stephen A. McNallen (born October 15, 1948) formed the Viking Brotherhood which later became the Asatru Folk Assembly. These organisations all fit within the mould of radical traditionalism while they may not use the title. The Odinic Rite, Asatru Folk Assembly and perhaps even Edred's Thorsson's Rune Gild have characteristics very similar to Traditionalist except in so much that they come from a distinctly heathen orientation. The Rune Gild is a little unusual with its Left Hand Path focus but still fits with a radical Traditionalist model with some degree of flexibility. While it does appreciate the unique Germanic source of the wisdom it underplays the religious forms of the Asatru traditions and is less ethnic focused.

The major difference between Radical Traditionalism and Traditionalism is its focus on cultural integrity or ethnic pluralism. Essentially this suggests that there is a natural affinity between a race, culture, people and a belief system and this organic resonance should be the basis of the tradition. Organisations within the Radical Traditionalist spectrum range from those who have a strong emphasis on this organic view and others who are more flexible. This ap-

proach accepts the diversity of races and traditions but is not racist in that it rejects any ranking of same, though some may do so. The suggestion of Asatru for Westerns, American Indian Traditions for American Indians, Tibetan Buddhism for Tibetans and so on is the foundation of the *weltanschauung* of this approach. Within the Radical Traditionalist spectrum are groups which are primarily religion in their orientation (Heathen) and those which have a primarily esoteric and magickal approach (The Rune Gild, for example).



Politically various theorists such as Alain de Benoist and Guillaume Faye of the French New Right could also be placed loosely in this category. Indeed this is what makes various organisations of the French New Right so appealing.

Tyr: Myth—Culture—Tradition is the name of an American Radical Traditionalist magazine which has published three issues so far and takes a similar heathen and/or pagan approach to Traditionalism.

The characteristics of Radical Traditionalist as elucidated by Tyr are impressive and certainly worth considering as further significant characteristics of the way Traditionalism needs to engage with the modern world.

1. *Resacralization of the world versus materialism.*
2. *Natural social hierarchy versus an artificial hierarchy based on wealth.*
3. *The tribal community versus the nation-state.*
4. *Stewardship of the earth versus the "maximization of resources."*
5. *A harmonious relationship between men and women versus the "war between the sexes."*
6. *Handicraft and artisanship versus industrial mass-production.*

FIDUS, BRAND AND BLUHER: NEW PATHS FOR EROTICISM

Fidus was the pseudonym used by German illustrator, painter and publisher Hugo Reinhold Karl Johann Höppener (1868 - 1948). He was a symbolist artist, whose work directly influenced the psychedelic style of graphic design of the late 1960s.

He was born to a confectioner in Lübeck, and demonstrated artistic talent at an early age. Around 1886 he met Karl Wilhelm Diefenbach (1851-1913) who was a German painter and mystic. Diefenbach was a Theosophist, Vegetarian and involved in the earliest "return to nature" movements. Fidus joined his commune near Much where they practised nudism, theosophy and vegetarianism.

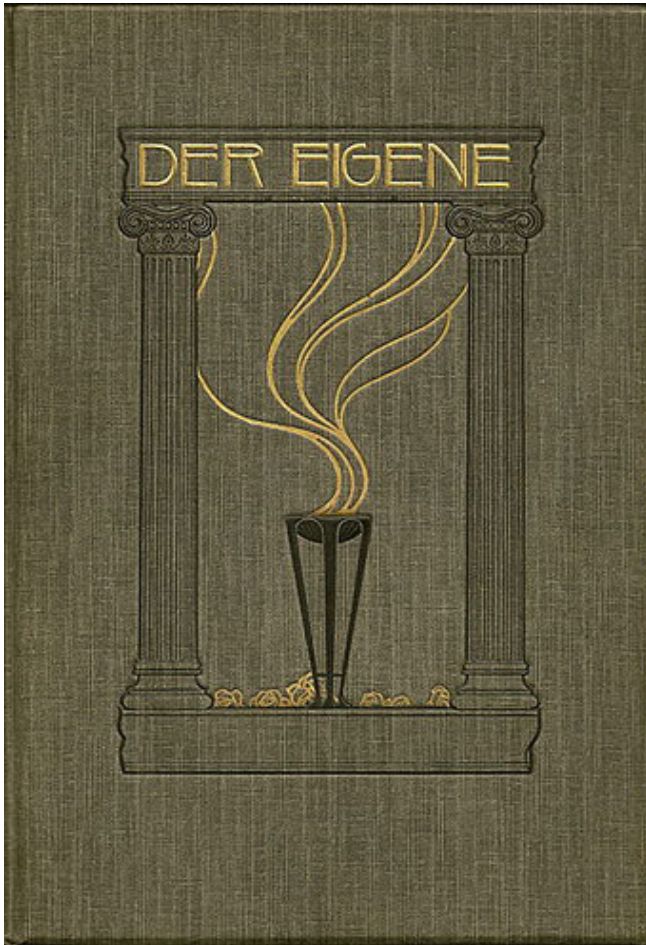
After the demise of the Diefenbach commune, he moved to Berlin and set up a commune of his own. His work moved strongly towards Germanic mythology and he became connected to counter revolutionary movements (Arthur Moller van de Bruck) and warrior erotic bunds such as those promoted by Adolf Brand.



Since 1895 Germany had experienced an interest in both paganism and nature religions. These trends manifested in such movements as the Wandervogel, which took long hikes and emphasized escaping from city life. At first this was a small occurrence but soon developed into a flood, it is estimated some 50,000 independent Wandervogellers travelled the countryside living in tents or Wandervogel nests. They pooled their money, wore woollen capes, shorts and hats and advocated a form of anarchist primitivism.

Connected to this movement was the Life Reform movement which also embodied many similar social reformist ideals including nudism, vegetarianism, sexual reform, health reform, community living and religious form which often took the form of Germanic mysticism.

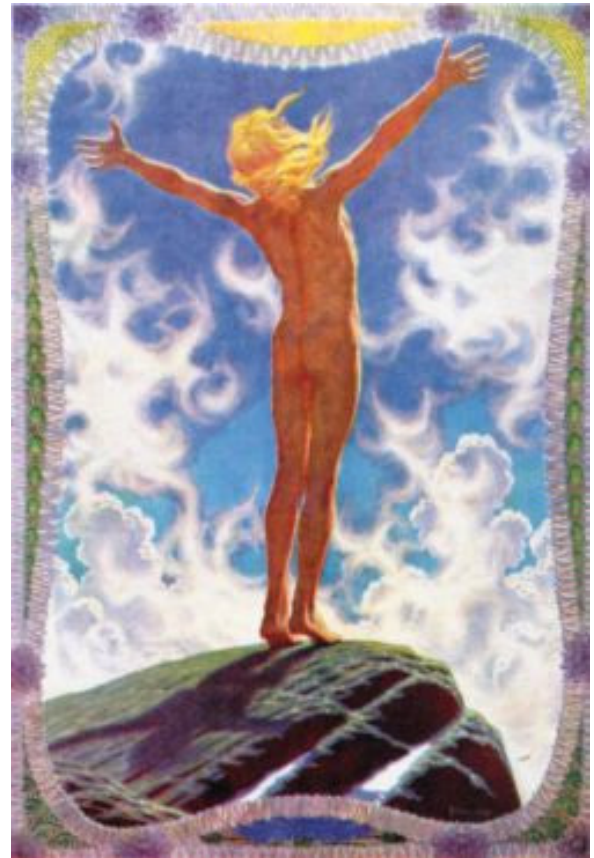
Fidus was connected to these movements and also to the radical thinker Adolf Brand. Adolf Brand (1874-1945) was a radical promoter of sex reform arguing for a natural bi-sexuality and publishing the first homosexual magazine, *Der Eigene*. *Der Eigene* attracted many authors including Erich Mühsam, Kurt Hiller, John Henry



Mackay (under the pseudonym Sagitta) and artists Wilhelm von Gloeden, Fidus and Sascha Schneider. Fidus regularly provided illustrations for *Der Eigene*. Fidus was also a member of Brand's *Gemeinschaft der Eigenen* organisation with the scientist Benedict Friedlaender principal theorist and Wilhelm Janse.

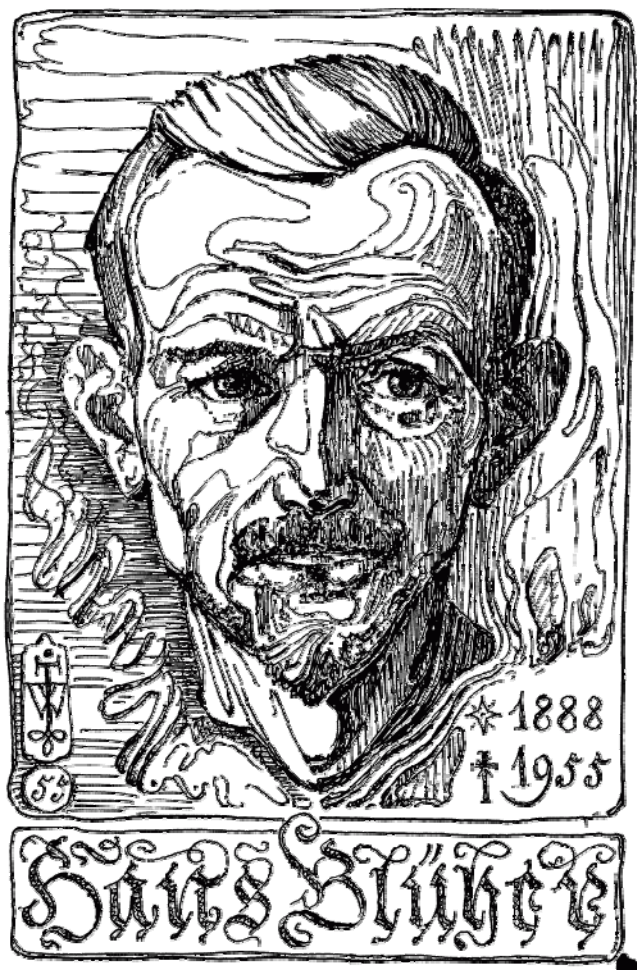
Brand is significant in that he rejected the medicalization of homosexuality as suggested by Magnus Hirschfeld and argued for the natural bi-sexuality of all men. He argued that the values of Judeo-Christianity had blinded us to the natural sexual heritage of our true natures.

Hirschfeld argued homosexuals were a third sex even women trapped in men's bodies, a concept which had disastrous consequences for gay rights since it ended up bringing about the psychiatric model of homosexuality as an illness. Brand however argued for a "masculine" approach to homosexuality which had more in common with the Greeks and the Warrior Band of Thebes. Brand continued to hold true to his



beliefs but gave up his activism after numerous fines and such harassment from the Nazi Party that he was left in financial ruin.





Closely related to the work of Adolf Brand is the work of a lesser known figure Hans Bluher. I found out about this remarkable man from the late Alisdair Clarke and his research on the Mannerbund. I have a number of his papers on hand which provide some significant background including *Hans Bluher and the Wandervogel* (Feb 2006).

Bluher tied together many aspects of the new growing same-sex movement in Germany. While connected to the Wandervogel movement and indeed writing the first history of it in 1912, he formed the *Jung Wandervogel* with Wilhelm Jansen which was male only.

In 1917 he wrote the first volume of his most important book, outlining his masculinist theory in *Die Rolle Der Erotik in Der Mannlichen Gesellschaft: Eine Theorie der Menschlichen Staatsbildung*, followed two years later with the second volume.

Bluher as with Fidus was linked to the *Gemeinschaft der Eigenen* (Community of the Self-Owners) founded officially by Adolf Brand. The unusual name was taken from the anarchism egoist philosophy of Max Stirner. Bluher argued that homosexuality was not a moral issue in Indo European societies and that such problems had only arisen with the monotheist faiths. He believed that the Mannerbunds or Male Mystery Cults of the past had a unique role to play in society and many had a strong homoeroticism element including the use of homosexual initiatory rites, something now documented by modern Indo Europeanists. He went further to that the Mannerbund rather than the nuclear family was the foundation of the Indo European society, certainly a contentious yet intriguing suggestion.

Bluher rejected Freud and rather than seeing sexuality coming from purely a biological source argued it comes from the united consciousness or Eros. In many ways this resonates with a Platonic view of homosexuality.

"It is not something that needs to be explained, but rather something that – as eros – makes explanation and meaning possible."

"Eros is a meaningful and meaning-constitutive phenomenon that can be reduced neither to mere symptom, nor to biology."

"Whenever sexuality makes itself noticed in man it has already been taken up into the workings of eros and thereby acquired a meaning."

This new model of sexuality was and is significant as it challenges the current models of sexual orientation. It rejects both the moralism of the monotheistic religions and the biological reductionism which looks for a gay gene. It argues for a different approach to culture which not only embraces bisexuality but includes a return to a more natural way of life, limited use of technology and more tribal village structures. This form of anarchist individualism coupled with a new approach to sexuality is challenging and needs further exploration.



Aleister Crowley and the Aeon of Horus
Paul Weston
Avalonian Aeon Publications 2009

Aleister Crowley and the Aeon of Horus is a strange, challenging and sometimes mind boggling book. It offers a bewildering journey through the underbelly of history which is at most times revealing and insightful while at other times seems to explore peripheral subjects in which the reader nearly gets lost.

It is a fascinating tale which starts by looking at the nature of the 20th century. It gives us a bird's eye view of Crowley's life but does not allow us to pigeon hole him. Crowley is so way beyond normal definition. He may have been a bi-sexual pornographer but he was all a master level chess player, mountaineer, scholar and writer. He is a true enigma.

As Weston suggests we need to understand Crowley in the context of fin de siècle culture including the cultural changes brought about by everything from Darwin to Nietzsche. The most significant aspect of Crowley's life was the reception of *The Book of the Law* (Liber AL vel

Legis) in 1904 declaring the Aeon of Horus. It would be easy to write this off as just another channelled book yet it has so many unusual numerical codes that it is just possible that it is of non human origin. But should it be seen in isolation? While many Thelemites think so, Weston throws the net wider.

Between 1916-1917 Carl Jung received a gnostic revelation called *Seven Sermons to the Dead*. This revelation supposedly came from an Alexandrian teacher known as Basilides. The strange link here is that one of the major aspects of the Alexandrian gnostic cult were Abrasax gems and many of these had Silent Horus or Harpocrates on them or Abrasax with a hawk head.

This link is fascinating and quite compelling; it becomes more complex with connections to Gurdjieff, Rene Guenon's outline of the cyclic nature of time and our present age as the Kali Kali and stories of Agartha and Shambhala and their cycles.

Weston makes a solid case for seeing the Aeon of Horus as outlined with the teachings of



Thelema within a larger context of cyclic change. He argues that this change simply manifests “as it is” and has powerful aspects which are interpreted by humans in many different ways, for good or ill. While the first chapter of the Book of the Law is related to Nuit and hence represents the “summer of love”, Horus the lord of the third chapter is far more apocalyptic.

Western explores this in the way that the Wandervogel and Volkish movements of Germany transformed into National Socialism. He examines, in some detail, stories about Gurdjieff and Crowley’s spy activity and documents well the various occult aspects of the Third Reich while keeping an even keel, so to speak.

He goes on to consider a further aspect of the thelemite vision, the work of Jack Parsons, who with L Ron Hubbard evoked Babalon and received Liber 49. This revelation of the divine feminine had a lot in common with Jung’s work on the divine feminine, the discovery of the Nag Hammadi library and the revival of witchcraft.

There are certainly a range of fascinating patterns which all do seem to link together.

Western continues these explorations looking at Witchcraft in some detail as well as examining Timothy Leary and the psychedelic sixties. Once again the Aeon change manifests in negative and positive poles with the summer of love on one hand and the madness of Charles Manson on the other.



Things get weirder yet as UFO’s enter the picture. It has been suggested by many occultists that Crowley and Parsons opened a gateway through which “something” was able to enter. Exactly what that “something is” is a matter of debate. Are they physically real, spiritual, demonic, ultraterrestrials, Weston covers the gambit of theories from a bewildering range of esotericists and occults. This approach can also be extended to everything from the Loch Ness Monster to the Mothmen and Men in Black. As Western works to tie this all together we explore the Sirius Mystery, Montauk and the secret codes of the Book of the Law. The book ends with a study of the psychology of Thelema in terms of the Eight Brain Circuit Model of Timothy Leary

Appendix A is a history of the Stele of Revealing while Appendix B looks in more detail at L. Ron Hubbard and the Babalon working.

Aleister Crowley and the Aeon of Horus is a challenging work, which attempts to unite a bewildering array of traditions, sources and concepts into a coherent model. I can appreciate Weston’s vision and believe that the goal of seeing The Book of the Law and the New Aeon in a larger context is an excellent one. At the same time this is a book which in itself demands a lot of decoding and deciphering. I am just not sure you can make as many links as he does and feel some of them are a little too tenuous. That being said I enjoyed the challenge of this book and highly recommend you read it, share it with some friends and debate it with them. It is that sort of book, it needs to be discussed and argued over.

THE METAPHYSICS OF WAR

The Metaphysics of War

Julius Evola

Arktos

Web: <http://www.arktos.com>

The Metaphysics of War is a profound work exploring the nature of honour and heroism. These days since many people are aware of Evola's esoteric and spiritual works his more strident political work may come as a bit of a shock. This is a work which will challenge and provoke, Evola's erudition is obvious and his contempt for the modern world palpable.

These essays were written during the period of Evola's engagement with Fascism and National Socialism. Of course the immediate reaction to any connection with such ideologies, not matter in what form, is to try and invalidate the author altogether. This form of politically correct character assassination has always irritated me in the extreme. An author can have a background with any left-wing extreme organisation and such trifles will be overlooked but not with Fascism or National Socialism. In any event let's get things out of the way by understanding Evola's view on politics, his engagement with both of these ideologies and the results of such interactions.

For Evola the nexus of all of life, from the smallest to the greatest concern was tradition. Not tradition in the sense of nostalgia but the living beating heart of the eternal perennial wisdom, gnosis as you may. Politics accordingly was only ever a means to an end and could never have any significance within itself.

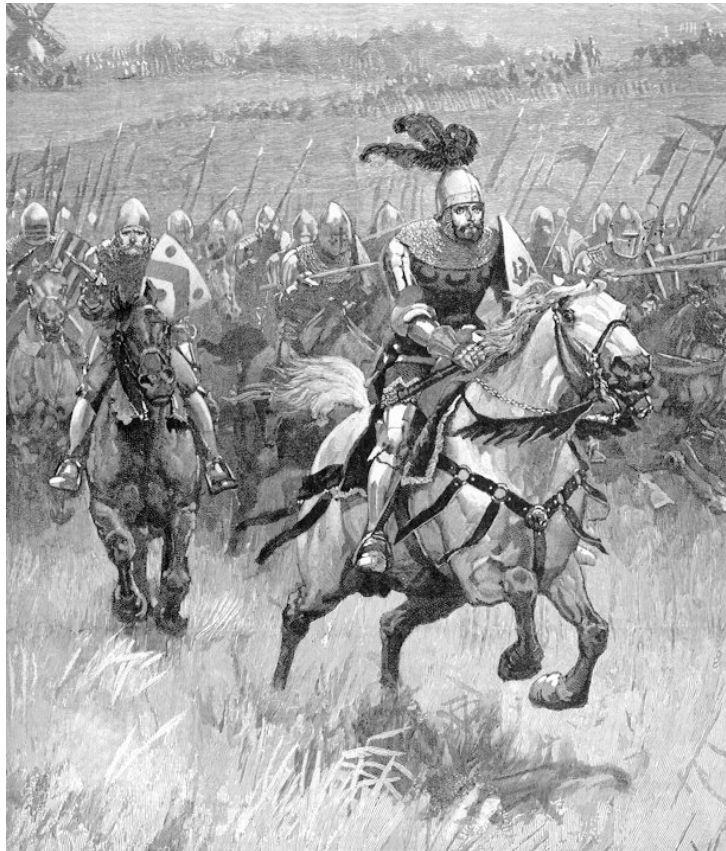
The only reason you would deal with the political system was in the hope, even if it is minor hope, that a return to more perennial forms may be possible. Since the current political systems had proved a failure Evola believe it may have been possible that both Fascism and Nationalism Socialism, since they both had some hierarchical and traditional tendencies could be used

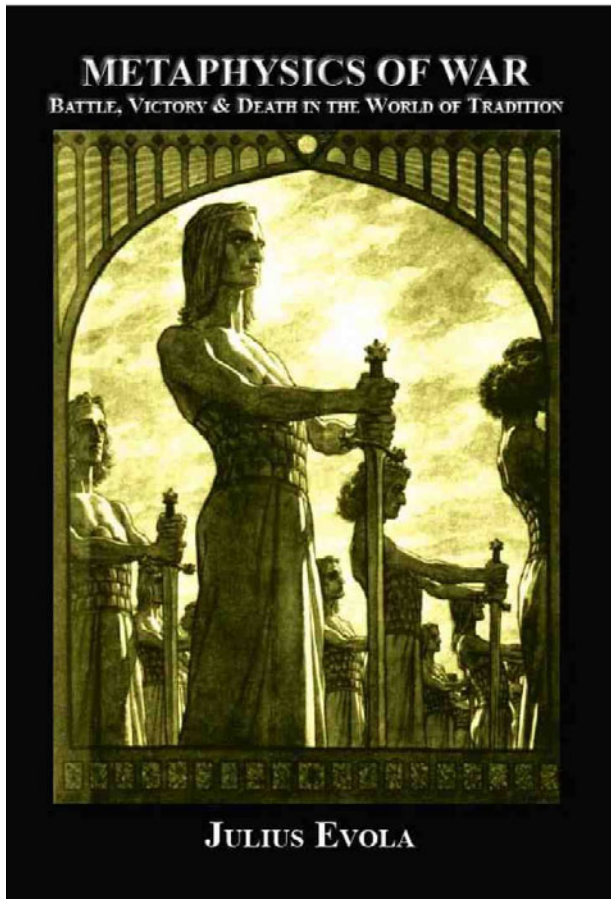
to create a new form of spiritual political empire. In the case of Fascism Evola worked to move fascism towards the goal of a resurrected Roman Empire. Not simply a shell with Roman facades and buildings, but a true spiritual living new Roman Empire.

His own views were far too sophisticated for the brutal forms these regimes finally took. He argued for a return to the essence of ancient Rome which was far beyond

Mussolini's goals and probably Mussolini's understanding ! His views on race were well argued; he presented a case for a three levels of race, biological, character and spiritual, something which the reductionist Third Reich would have none of. For the Third Reich race was biology alone and Evola's spiritual vision was of little interest.

When you begin to investigate Evola's relationship to both Fascism and National Socialism you see a traditionalist who is working from the position of principle, knowing that all forms of politics have failed and using whatever political revolutions are occurring in an attempt to bring





a return to true values. In the end Evola was disappointed and saw that National Socialism and Fascism had failed but bluntly not more than the failure he saw in liberalism and democracy, communism and socialism. Since all of these forms of government were anti-traditional and reduced man to his lowest common denominator whether as a cog in a workers wheel (communism) or a consumer within a capitalism market in the end he rejected all of them and developed a position of apoliteia.

The Metaphysics of War includes an excellent selection of challenging essays never seen before in English.

There is so much of interest in this challenging volume. Evola examines the nature of war from the model of tradition and shows how it has moved in a degenerative cycle through the castes or functions. War began in traditional societies as governed by the higher function and degenerated through warrior battles onto wars of economics to finally the worker run wars of communism where everyone is equal and cannon fodder. This is reflected, sadly, on a personal level as honour and heroism moves



from the spiritual to the personal, economic and finally to simply fighting through blind obedience with no sense of superior awareness. Evola argues that we must return to seeing war as a spiritual occasion. At present most warriors fight with personal honour but have no sense of a greater vision. Evola gives many examples from various cultures of this higher vision of the warrior but again and again returns to Rome. In Rome war was regulated by religious institutions and acts of divination and every soldier, even the most lowly, saw himself as an integral part of a spiritual as well as military structure

The crusades, are another significant example, in that they gave an opportunity for an asceticism that was of a non contemplative nature to come into effect. It offered an arena for the heroic to shine. Both sides were able to come to the same transcendent state regardless of theology which was supra politics and supra human. While particularities of race and homeland could



Krishna and Arjuna



Krishna reveals his transcendental form to Arjuna

not be ignored, from the perspective of tradition both sides can be seen in terms of sacred heroism.

Leading on from this Evola examines Islam and Hinduism and their traditions of heroism. In Islam we come to understand the true nature of Jihad where the greater war was the battle against the ego, vanity and indulgence while the lesser war was a just war against the enemy.

The Bhagavad Gita is a perfect guide for detached warrior conduct. Krishna and Arjuna are actually masks of the one being, the warrior. Krishna is the transcendent self while Arjuna the active. Through focus on the transcendent Arjuna can complete his battle with a clear consciousness as petty and human concerns are put aside and the battle is transformed into something truly sublime. Regardless of the conflict, war must be considered an opportunity for the heroic in the individual and the culture to arise

The traditional concept of the army must be based on inner strength, integrity, loyalty and comradeship. This is not some false form of Christian neighbourly love or a socialism brotherhood where all men are the same. This leads into some of the more controversial yet insightful essays, those on race. Evola looks clearly at racial differences and doesn't shy away from

them but he argues that it is foolish to reduce man to biology alone and that character and soul must also be considered.

Heroism comes in different shapes and sizes, while the average soldier may achieve a level of heroism simply from participating in war; there is also the potential for the experience to create a superhuman hero. For such an event to occur the nature of war must be harnessed and the I or personality dissolved and the higher self affirmed. To do this requires the reconciliation of contemplation and action. While mysticism talks of the death of the I in monastic devotion,

Evola sees the same process, in a more refined and higher form, in the heroism of war.

Evola continues his examination of different types of heroes considering the sub personal hero of Russian communism where life has little significance and hence individual heroism is impossible. He also examines the Zen based heroism of Japan and the Roman concept of Devotio. This was a unique religious martial practise where a Roman soldier, especially someone in a place of authority, would enter the fray knowing he would die hence evoking the power of the gods and being assured of victory. Evola continues his examination of Roman war customs looking at the Roman concept of Victory and how it was essentially religious. Roman religion did not see the spiritual as separate but within history, within culture, action and imbuing all aspects of everyday life.

The Metaphysics of War is a challenging work on so many levels. It is profound, insightful and erudite. It displays amazing clarity and clearness of wisdom, this is tradition without sentimentalism or gloss. Evola challenges the spirituality of the west which has become sentimental, weak and abstract and at the same time rejects the military worldview of the west which had been reduced to the material sphere only.

There is so much that can be gained from studying these essays and of course they are not just significant for the soldier, since in the Kali Yuga we are warriors of the Dark Age, aren't we?

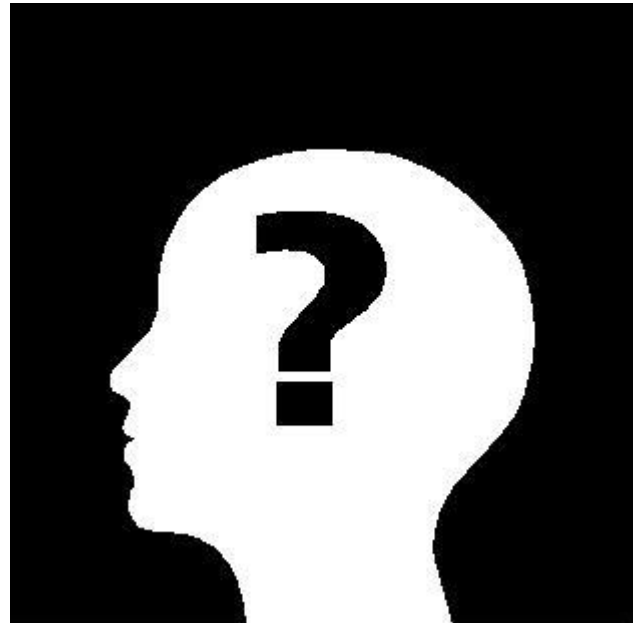
Who am I ?

The Psychology of Selves

Most of us believe we have a coherent and singular self, that my concept of “myself” is who “I” am and while “I” may have some suppressed and hidden aspects to my personality, ranging from childhood trauma to various fears and phobias, “I” am still a discrete “Self”, a singular entity, coherent and in control. Most of us never question who we are, regardless of evidence to the contrary. While we notice changes in mood, personality and most obviously behaviour, even changes we may find a little strange or quirky, we rationalize these away and never question the solidity of our concept of self.

It is interesting that ancient “esoteric” traditions have always denied this model. The early Gnostics, for example, portrayed the world as battleground between various demi-gods (Archons) with the most forceful of the Archons gaining ascendancy and declaring “I am the creator of the world”. In this mythos, the most ego-centric demigod was Ialdabaoth (Greek for Ruler) and when he acclaimed his supremacy, a voice came from the heavens denouncing his arrogance. Stephan Hans Hoeller, a highly respected Jungian and Gnostic author, sees this as an early representation of the nature of the Psyche. The Archons are the many sub-personalities, while Ialdabaoth represents the more dominate primary sub personality. The voice from above symbolizes the need for a “coordinating ego” or the organizing of these many sub personalities. The battle between the Archons symbolizes the true condition of most human beings, we believe we are one self yet in reality we are a myriad of warring petty selves most of which we are not even conscious of.

This model is also found in Medieval Alchemy, where the Alchemists used symbols such as the various planets and metals to represent real aspects of their own psyche. Complex coded texts were written describing in detail the various aspects of what we now know as the unconscious and how to transform the more negative of these into something better. Rather

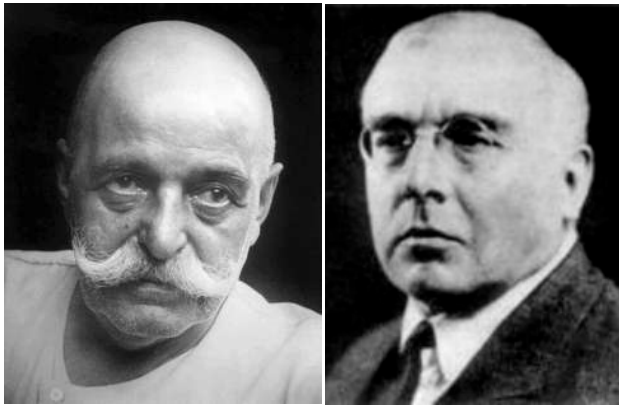


than being the process of turning “lead into gold”, many now believe that the essential aim of the alchemical process was the transformation of the psyche of the Alchemist him or herself. This interpretation is especially popular within the Jungian school.

The lack of a singular self is also found in the Buddhist traditions which have an elaborate psychology outlining the many aspects of the senses, psyche and what we know call the unconscious. Buddhist models of perception were far more complex than similar models of the time and describe in some detail how our “sub personalities” filter the information we receive through the senses and hence model our way of dealing with the world.

Indeed some of these early models of perception offer quite astounding detail of how our sub personalities are able to transform our experience of reality. In these models (which are now backed by modern science), we come to appreciate how the sub personalities are the filter which stand between what our senses perceive and what we actually see or understand. In many ways this model is now reflected in the metamodel of Neuro-Linguistic Programming “where the map is not the territory”.

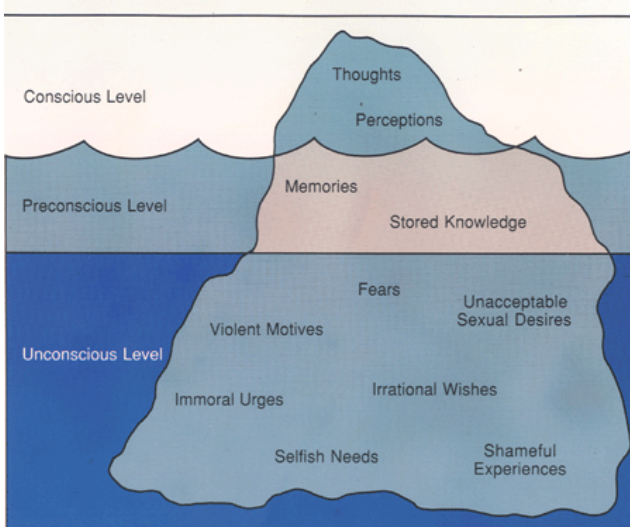
The Fourth Way Tradition of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky is a more recent esoteric tradition which clearly stood against the model of a singular self. Gurdjieff and Ouspensky were Russian mystics of the early 20th century whose work on the fragmented nature of consciousness is still powerful and insightful. The Fourth Way placed a strong emphasize on understanding how little control we actually have over our lives, since the fragmented selves are



Gurdjieff and Ouspensky

actually running the show. Until we appreciate that we do not have a singular self and that we need to create or evolve a coordinating self to utilize the sub personalities we are essentially asleep. Indeed their key concept that we must create a "self" is an early echo of the model now found in many esoteric schools.

These examples may be somewhat obscure to those not read within the esoteric traditions, but do set the stage for the work on the nature of consciousness in modern psychology. While some philosophers such as Fredrich Nietzsche and Gottfried Leibniz discussed some aspects of what we could define as the nature of the unconscious and sub personalities it was Sigmund Freud who really offered its first historical presentation.

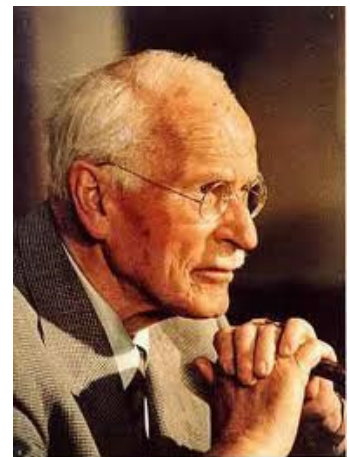


Freud's Iceberg Mind Model

Within Freud's psychoanalytic theory, the unconscious contains what is actively repressed from conscious thought and hence is composed of taboos, desires, traumatic memories, and painful emotions. Freud sees these as originating via suppression of painful emotion and while Freud does not necessarily see the unconscious as negative, this does seem to be the overall picture one gets from his approach. There seems to be little room within the Freudian model for positive use of the unconscious or subpersonalities. Freud seems to see as the unconscious as a "Pandora's Box" which is very dangerous to open and only contains suppressed "ills".

Freud's Model of the psyche included the conscious mind (or Ego) and two facets parts of the Unconscious: the Id or instincts and the Superego. Freud's understanding of the Superego is strange to say the least and seems to suggest that it is a form of internalization of cultural standards. The Id within Freud's theory certainly included some model of subpersonalities but it was never fully developed within Freudian theory and again has a strongly negative tinge.

Carl Jung took this model a lot further and transformed Freud's view of the unconscious. Jung posited deeper and deeper levels within the psyche, moving from personal through to collective and perhaps even beyond. Jung also introduced



such concepts as the Archetype which he felt were forms which exists throughout all cultures within the collective unconscious of humanity. He placed a strong emphasis on myth and legend and brought back spirituality to psychology, which Freud has uniformly rejected.

As psychology has developed the traditional model of Freud is really considered fairly antiquated, however, one of the elements found in all the various psychological systems which seems to be have been overlooked is that of



sub personalities or the “psychology of Selves”. It seems that many modern psychologists either deny the existence of consciousness altogether and see it as simply an extension or product of the brain (a common view within cognitive psychology) or still see the self as a coherent whole.

Accordingly we still regularly see the interpretation of multiple selves being representative of neurosis. Indeed in many forms of psychology sub personalities are still regularly related to models of disassociation and the experience of “splitting” where emotions, mental states and even memories are dislocated from the rest of the Psyche. This creates a strange anomaly since any objective analysis would show that everyone has sub personalities and while certainly the degree of pathology or sanity may vary, to suggest that the presence of sub personalities suggests mental disturbance is to infer all humans are mentally disturbed. While some radical psychologists such as Wilhelm Reich would heartily agree with such a diagnosis it does not especially seem like a useful one.

There is no consensus in modern psychology and philosophy about the nature of the self, many psychologists still place a strong emphasis on attempting integrate all the sub personalities, even within Jung’s model of Individuation there seems to be an assumption that the Self is singular. Even when models accept the multiplicity of the psyche (such as with the Archetypal Psychology of James Hillman), there are no

real techniques offered to work with and use these multiple selves.

The Nature of the Psyche

As more and more research is undertaken into the nature of the Psyche it seems that it is not a singular entity at all. The mind develops in response or reaction to various events within our lives. Depending on the nature of these events we develop specific “personas” to deal with them. We can easily see this by a little self analysis, it is quite clear that we deal with our parents, our boss, our partner and our business acquaintances in different ways. While we may not consider these sub personalities, if we are honest and “watch ourselves” for a while, we will be surprised how different these various modes of behaviour are and how they represent different parts of our psyche rather than simply being different behaviours. It is clear that we are a myriad of selves, some of which we are more or less conscious.

We have many different 'selves' which vary in intensity. Some are primary, others are secondary, many are disowned and suppressed.

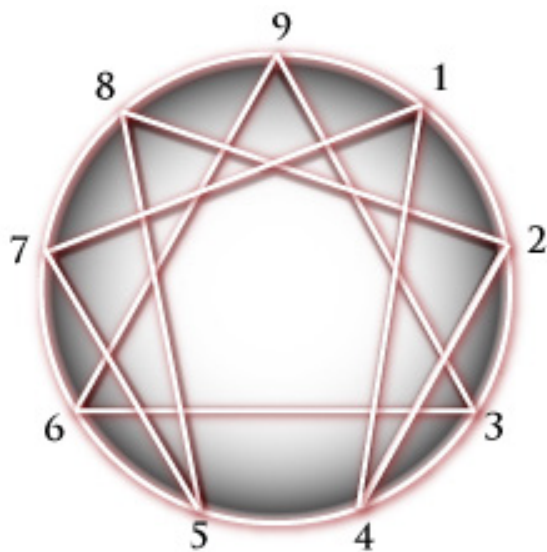
The question may be asked how do we manage these selves at all ? It seems that the various primary selves simply move in and out of consciousness as required and we create an artificial sense of who we are. We believe we are singular and “one self” and yet on another level we are unhappy because we realize that at times our behaviour and attitudes are not coherent or consistent.

Why do we behave in different ways in different situations ?

Why do certain stimulus trigger certain controlled responses?

Why is it that when a certain stimulus occurs (seeing a dog, noticing a certain smell etc) that a whole different mood seems to come over us?

There are many practical techniques to work with sub personalities and these are found in both esoteric and psychological fields. Gurdjieff and Ouspensky’s Fourth Way is a striking example. Gurdjieff developed a system where plants have one brain, animals two and humans three. These brains are “centres of consciousness” and reflect primary sub personali-



ties. Each of these centres can also be found to have their sub personalities. The three primary centres are the intellectual, emotional and moving centre. The moving centre has three primary sections, sex, instinct and motor.

It is only when these centres can be operated in unison and in balance that higher centres will evolve and man will become truly immortal. In the Fourth Way system it is only when the divine body is developed that one becomes a true immortal entity.

Of course this is just the beginning of the system Gurdjieff has a elaborate cosmology regarding the Ray of Creation and a significant system of work based on the Enneagram, which has sadly been reduced to a

tool for pop personality diagnosis. To really appreciate the complexity of the Fourth Way requires quite some diligent study and practise.

ABSOLUTE	1	do
ALL WORLDS	3	si
ALL SUNS	6	la
SUN	12	sol
ALL PLANETS	24	fa
EARTH	48	mi
MOON	96	re
ABSOLUTE	▼	do

A psychological take on the multiplicity of selves is found in the Voice Dialogue system by Hal and Sidra Stone. The focus here is on therapy and well being not immortality and hence the language and presentation is a little different. Voice Dialogue does not attempt to unite the selves nor suppress them but allow them to work in a healthy environment. They are co-ordinated by the development of the aware ego which co-ordinates them a bit like a conductor in the orchestra.

The multiplicity of selves and the lack of true identity is key to a complete understanding of esotericism. One could easily argue that is a nihilism view and this is a criticism thrown often at Buddhism and the Fourth Way. However if we do not have a self then we have the freedom to forge one, one that truly reflects our desire to develop and become more than human.

Of course this model has much in common with the vision of Fredrich Nietzsche and the evolution of a new type of man. For Nietzsche the death of belief in a personal god, the destruction of old values and the development of true aristocracy (based on the concept of the best not on heredity) gives us the opportunity to forge a new vision of humanity.

While most humans are locked in a cycle of eternal re-occurrence those who realize they have to forge a self from the myriad of confusion that exists within the psyche have the potential to truly become more than human.

I teach you the overman. Man is something that shall be overcome. What have you done to overcome him?

All beings so far have created something beyond themselves; and do you want to be the ebb of this great flood and even go back to the beasts rather than overcome man? What is the ape to man? A laughingstock or a painful embarrassment. And man shall be just that for the overman: a laughingstock or a painful embarrassment.

**Fredrich Nietzsche
Thus spoke Zarathustra,
Walter Kaufmann transl.**

HAVE YOU LIVED BEFORE?

Wendy Stokes

The concept of reincarnation is the belief that the soul survives physical death and is reborn into a new physical body. This belief has been the basis of most of the major world religions. The Aboriginal peoples of Australia believe that during the Dreamtime, many millennia ago, their ancestors were born many times, and are reincarnated in the children born today. This reincarnation takes place when a woman passes where an ancestor has been buried, and the spirit of the deceased enters her womb as a pregnancy. When the child is born, it is recognized as a relative, and as a person who has the wisdom of many lifetimes.

The historian, Herodotus, reported that the ancient Egyptians believed that they could return in future lives as various other species, such as crocodiles or herons. The ancient priesthood of the Celtic lands, the Druids, were also believers in reincarnation, as were the people of Scandinavia and surrounding countries. The Hindus,



Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists were early believers (Buddha is said to have reincarnated 500 times, as an elephant, a priest, a prince and a hermit) and there were several Jewish sects, such as the Essenes, who believed, as do present day Cabbalists. But there are many passages in the New Testament about reincarnation. It was suggested that John the Baptist might be a reincarnation of the Old Testament prophet, Elijah.

Jesus told Nicodemus that *“unless a man is born again, he could not enter the Kingdom of Heaven”*. Jesus was asked *“If a man is born blind, whose sin caused the blindness?”* Jesus replied that in no way was the blindness related to sin. There was also speculation that Jesus was the reincarnation of the high priest, Melchisedek.

In the early Christian Church, there were Christian sects who also believed they were physically reborn, such as Gnostics and Cathars, prior to their persecution and extinction by the established church. Many Native American tribes were believers, prior to their compulsory Christianization. When someone died, a newborn child was given a dead person's name to retain the qualities and values of the deceased. Leading ancient Greek philosophers, such as



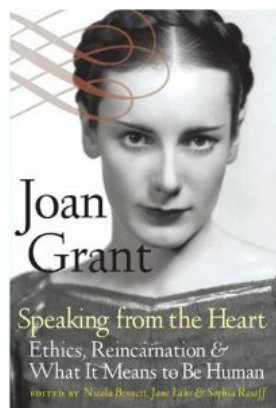
Socrates and Pythagoras believed, and many recent philosophers also, such as Giordano Bruno, Schopenhauer and Goethe, all who seriously explored this subject.

Edgar Cayce, the sleeping prophet promoted the belief. Martin Buber's stories in the Baal Shem Tov are explicit about this subject and Gotthold Lessing was interested enough to explore this subject too in his writings. Even some Muslim sects, such as Sufis, despite persecution, still hold to this belief. Rudolf Steiner was a believer, as were many Theosophists and Rosicrucians.

The car magnate, Henry Ford remembered a previous life as a soldier killed at the Battle of Gettysburg and General George S Patton was convinced he was the reincarnation of the Carthaginian General, Hannibal. The actor, Glenn Ford remembered being a French cavalryman under Louis XIV and actually spoke in a Parisian dialect that was shown to have been from the seventeenth century.

The late author, Joan Grant, remembered many of her previous lives and described them in more than a dozen books. When she wrote her first book, the '*Winged Pharaoh*', released in 1937, she was thirty years old, and no-one knew that she was writing from memory about her life in ancient Egypt. '*Speaking from the Heart*', was posthumously released in 2007 describing her extraordinary ability to remember her previous lives.

There is a housewife from the UK who remembers a previous life as a Jewess in York in the twelfth century. She describes how she wore a badge to denote her Jewish origins. Badges were not known to have been issued prior to 1215.



She described the crypt of a church. Investigations later revealed that Jews did wear badges in the time in which she describes and the church was discovered to have a blocked up crypt. Her memories demonstrate the accuracy of her memory and research has proved her correct in many extraordinary details.

In another well known case, Jenny Cockell described dream-like memories of being a young Irishwoman by the name of Mary Sutton in the mid twentieth century. Mary died leaving eight children motherless. She tracked down these children and brought them together and several were convinced by her story.

In Western spiritual movements, such as Seth, a being who speaks through the medium Jane Roberts, successive lives are accepted. Far more people in the world today believe in reincarnation than refute it. There have been several interesting studies into childhood memories and birth marks and some convincing scientific research has been conducted by Dr Brian Weiss and Dr Walter Semkiw.



Prof. Ian Stevenson, Director of Personality Studies at the University of Virginia has studied 3,000 cases over forty years and suggests that strange dreams, phobias and health problems could indicate an unresolved issue from a previous life. Many researchers now state that reincarnation is a legitimate phenomenon, at least for some people.

Wendy Stokes is the author of *The Lightworkers Circle Guide – A Workbook for Spiritual Groups* published worldwide by O Books. Available at all good bookshops and on Amazon ISBN: 978 1 84694 387 4

Visit: <http://www.wendystokes.co.uk>

The John Anthony West Ancient Wisdom Foundation

When ideas change, everything changes

John Anthony West

The Ancient Wisdom Fund is a not-for-profit initiative developed within The International Fortean Organization.

Its purpose is to further research into the reality of a high and sophisticated civilization existing in remote antiquity (predating ancient Egypt, Sumer and India by millennia) and to communicate the results of that research through print and visual media to a mass audience.

Background

Plato's *Timaeus*, the *Vedas* of Ancient India and the hieroglyphic texts of Ancient Egypt all reference such a high civilization, and, indeed, claim that their own civilizations are the inheritors of that much earlier wisdom. Though dismissed as myth and legend by several centuries of modern scholars, the ancient wisdom hypothesis has gradually gained credence over the past few decades through the works and publications of a handful of independent scholars, scientists and researchers.

In the 1950's, magisterial works by philosopher/mathematician R.A. Schwaller de Lubicz (*The Temple of Man, Sacred Science, etc.*) and Hindu historian Stella Kramrish (*The Hindu Temple*) demonstrated the reality of advanced spiritual/scientific doctrines responsible for the prodigious art and architecture of ancient Egypt and India respectively. In the 1970's M.I.T. Historians of Science Giorgio de Santillana and Hertha von Dechend (*Hamlet's Mill*) showed that an advanced astronomy pervades the mythology and legends not only of sophisticated societies such as Egypt, India, China and Mesoamerica, but also of those commonly considered 'primitive' and devoid of science or mathematics.

A New Scholarly Discipline Was Born

Throughout the the past three decades it has been furthered through a spate of seminal



works. JAW's *Serpent in the Sky* introduced Schwaller's 'Symbolist' interpretation of Egypt to a much broader audience and, developed, via geology, the theory that the Great Sphinx of Giza is a mighty remnant of that far older civilization. His Emmy Award winning *The Mystery of the Sphinx* brought his and geologist Robert M. Schoch's scientific research to an audience of hundreds of millions. Robert Bauval, (*Orion Mystery*,) put forward the idea that the three pyramids of the Giza Plateau represent the Belt stars of Orion, which was developed further in *The Message of the Sphinx*, co-written with Graham Hancock. At the very least, these works demonstrate the crucial role played by astronomy in ancient Egyptian thought. This work finds its parallel in Mesoamerica in William Sullivan's *Secret of the Incas* and John Major Jenkins' *Mayan Cosmology*.

Other scholars have contributed studies validating and upgrading the greater antiquity and sophistication of other ancient civilizations as well.

The Controversy

Like all paradigm- challenging work, the research, books and videos supporting the ancient civilization/ancient wisdom theory have aroused opposition from orthodox scholars in the affected fields. Whether considered or otherwise, their objections have to be met, and a lively and ongoing controversy has been initiated.

A result of that debate has been to attract both interest and support not only from an excited public but from a minority of scientists and scholars within the various relevant disciplines as well .

Goals

Though research into all aspects of ancient wisdom is scholarly and scientific, the research facilities and funding that would normally come from established academic, scientific and governmental sources are not available to those challenging their very intellectual, philosophical and historical foundations.

Therefore, the objective of the Ancient Wisdom Initiative is to further work in the various areas already opened up, explore new areas, and facilitate communication of the ongoing controversy and of exciting and momentous results through print and media channels.

First Projects

I. AWF Operating and Administration Budget. To include: remuneration for personnel, office space, equipment, etc.

II Testing The Water Weathering Hypothesis. Geologist Robert M. Schoch of Boston University and John Anthony West are preparing a three-stage scientific project to submit the Supreme Council of Antiquities in Egypt. This will entail

1. Visits to Egypt by Schoch and West to re-examine the evidence so far discovered in the light of criticisms posed by a number of scientific opponents. These visits will also enable Schoch to study a considerable number of crucial new pieces of evidence that have been discovered subsequent to the theory's initial presentation at the 1991 Geological Society of America's Annual Convention. Findings will be described in a scientific monograph to be submitted to peer-reviewed journals and an application for a second presentation to the GSA for its 2000 convention will be tendered.

- 2: A panel of independent geologists will be provided with the evidence and will travel to Egypt to investigate and report on their findings.

3. A proposal will be submitted to the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities to bring a team of scientists back with seismographs, ground-penetrating radar and other advanced technologies to look for still further evidence of the 'Lost civilization' of Egypt.

III: Magical Egypt - a Three Part Documentary TV Series. This quality series, intended for the cable and home TV audience, hosted and written by John Anthony West will present an in-depth tour of ancient Egypt from the 'Symbolist' point of view

IV: Deciphering the Gosford Glyphs. In the Australian bush, two hours north of Sydney, carved into the high stone walls of a hidden, narrow passageway, there are what appear to be ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. Discovered fifty years ago by chance, by a hiker, they were summarily dismissed by Egyptologists and archaeologists as forgeries or fakes.

On a recent trip to Sydney, John Anthony West went to look at these carvings and was not at all certain that they were or could be fakes. He made photos and drawings of the glyphs, available to Edmund Meltzer, a PhD Egyptologist, and well known expert on hieroglyphics. Without access to the actual site, on the basis of the information available, a preliminary study by Meltzer could not categorically confirm an ancient Egyptian origin for the glyphs. But he was able to decipher numerous genuine Egyptian phrases and sentences. For various reasons Meltzer feels it unlikely that the inscriptions are modern inventions.

Meanwhile, on the basis of the available photos, Robert Schoch noted that the glyphs are often covered with lichens and he suggested that the lichens could be carbon dated which in turn could help to confirm or refute an ancient date for the inscriptions. A colleague of Schoch's is the world's leading expert in the study of lichens.

Both Schoch and Meltzer feel strongly that the site merits further detailed study. Accordingly an AWF initiative is therefore in place to finance a one week trip to Australia to examine all aspects of the inscriptions *in situ*.

If it were proved that ancient Egyptians had actually visited Australia and had carved these inscriptions, it would be a dramatic scholarly discovery that would undermine the foundations of current archaeological anti-diffusionist beliefs.

Web: <http://www.jawest.net/awf2.htm>

The Pathwalkers Guide to the Nine Worlds
Raven Kaldera
Asphodel Press

Web: [http:// www.asphodelpress.com](http://www.asphodelpress.com)

The Pathwalkers Guide to the Nine Worlds is a very unusual book. While based squarely on the tradition wisdom of the northern traditions, it is comprised of personal experiences and wisdom gained directly through interactions with the denizens of the nine worlds. This "spirit gained gnosis" is significant and offers great insight into the nature of the nine worlds and how to explore them. Kaldera collects materials from a wide range of pathwalkers within his group to offer quite a comprehensive volume.

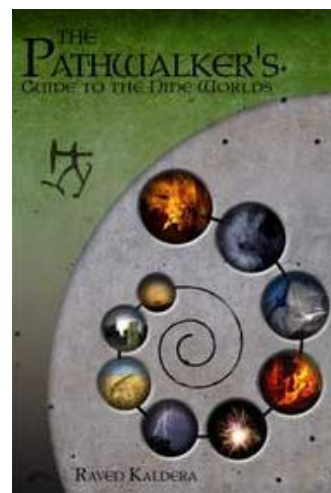
The introduction to Pathwalkers is honest to the point of being confronting. It is not often an author bares their soul in such a way. The sincerity of the work and the way in which Kaldera pulls no punches and tells no lies makes it clear where he is coming from. His integrity cannot be doubted and his approach is brave in the sometimes bitchy environment of the pagan and heathen communities. He stands by the experiences of himself and the members of his group and offers a truly unique work. Hel is his goddess and he discusses being a northern pagan shaman to avoid the labelling wars so often found in the heathen community.

Kaldera outlines the nature of faring forth in spirit as well as Pathwalking. Faring Forth is the same as astral travelling which involves visualization and directing or willing the hamr and there are a range of techniques offered for us to use.

Pathwalking is a technique which works in a bi-focal manner, the physical and astral bodies are somehow aligned with the spiritual realities of the nine worlds. As you walk in the physical body, you move with associated movements within the various worlds. This technique is certainly unusual and has its effects on the physical body but Kaldera presents it as a valid alternative for those who find getting out of their body difficult.

Kaldera outlines how to use the runes to travel through the worlds. This is quite a unique presentation and one worth exploring, he uses the Anglo Saxon rune set but this can be easily adapted to the your rune set of choice. Kaldera

offers a comprehensive outline of each rune including how to draw them, colour and what they can be used for in the various worlds. Raido, for example, will open the way and show you which road to take, Laguz will find water and Algiz is a powerful protection rune. According to Kaldera, Algiz, for example.. *"is drawn with the index finger, from the line bottom to top, and then draw in the V from left to right. Its color is black."*



After we learn some skills (such as grounding, shielding and protecting) we are ready to explore the Nine Worlds but first we must get to know some common sense rules. One of the first is not to judge a non-human entity by how it looks and treat them with respect, there are lots of other rules which are useful and will save some grief when travelling. Kaldera also explores building a kit and creating a Stang or world tree pole.

To truly appreciate the vision of this work we need to break and anthropomorphic view of magic and appreciate the many worlds, locales and denizens of the nine worlds. Kaldera offers a truly comprehensive look at all the various lifestreams including the Aesir, Vanir and Jotunfolk. While many followers of Odinism find the Jotnir, gods of the Jotunfolk, difficult (to say the least), Kaldera explores in detail the role of Loki, Surt and so on.

We are then offered an amazing travel guide to the Nine Worlds with extensive coverage of all worlds, halls, minor and major locations, flora, fauna, cautions, offerings and other pertinent information. There are some interesting debates along the way such as whether Midgard is earth or earth in its astral form and discussions of personal experiences with the various life-forms. The book offers experiences of these travels on parchment like pages which give it a personal and direct feel.

This is a one of the most comprehensive guides

to exploring the Nine Worlds I have read. It is creative and innovative (such as with its use of the runes within the worlds) and challenging. It is intelligent, informative, at times moving, but always stimulating. There is lot to think about and even more to put into practise.

Wrydwalkers **Raven Kaldera** **Asphodel Press**

Wrydwalkers gives us an extensive outline of the techniques of Northern Tradition Shamanism, this claim automatically brings with it some controversy. Many historians debate whether there is evidence of Shamanism within the Northern Tradition at all and there is lots of arguing about the connections of Seidr to Shamanism. Kaldera does not claim to present a reconstructed tradition but argues that the techniques being offered were taught to him and his fellow spirit-workers directly by the gods and spirits. This form of Shamanism hence predates what is known as Asatru and Odinism and it would be perhaps fair to suggest that Seidr is probably a latter remainder.

This work is hence controversial but I believe it should be examined on its own merits. The approach Kaldera takes is honest and upfront, he makes it clear that the techniques outlined originate from personal gnosis and that they require a real, personal belief in the gods and spirits, no iffs, no buts.

This is polytheistic Northern Shamanism clear and straight forward.

Shamanism of this form is distinct from magical work such as with the runes and focuses primarily on work-



Saami Shaman

ing with spirits. In most cases an entity forms an alliance of some sort with a shaman and this dyad is the basis of the practice. Kaldera suggests that while the northern people did not have shamans during their lore periods, this tradition comes from much, much earlier but is lost to written records. Kaldera sees the Rokkr deities as the first wave of entities and Vanir and Aesir as later and writes from this perspective.

Kaldera also offers an insightful essay comparing the culturally inert and modernist form of core shamanism (ala Michael Harner) with classic forms which have a strong personal belief in the gods.

This is a fascinating work which focuses on how to have an alliance with the spirits and gods, the various forms of alliances and why they come about. One theory involves dire necessity and lawful prey. That is that there must be a specific necessity for a god or spirit to form an alliance and there should be a special karmic allowance which makes one individual rather than another lawful prey, so to speak, for an alliance. Remember an alliance is a hard path and not one which should be entered without forethought.

There is lots of practical information throughout this book including on working with the elements and divination. The section on runes as spirit allies is a real challenge. In this section Kaldera outlines each of the runes from the perspective of them being living, breathing spirit allies and discusses how to work with this accordingly.

This is a very different and thought provoking approach. There are also sections on soul repair and on the difficulties of being a shaman such as taboos and shaman sickness.

This is another challenging work from Raven Kaldera which once again confronts and astounds. It has a lot of offer and includes material not found in any other book on Northern Shamanism. The section on the runes as spirit allies I found especially thought provoking. Once again a volume which needs to be studied contemplated and put into practise.

Web: <http://www.asphodelpress.com>

**Wightridden
Paths of Northern
Tradition Shamanism
Raven Kaldera
Asphodel Press 2007**

Wightridden: Paths of Northern Tradition Shamanism is a one of a kind volume. The introduction puts the other many volumes by Kaldera and his fellow spirit workers into context and then explains clearly what shamanism is. Shamanism involves serving the tribe through relationships with gods and spirits. This is not modernist or new age shamanism but tradition based spirit driven shamanism informed by direct experience.

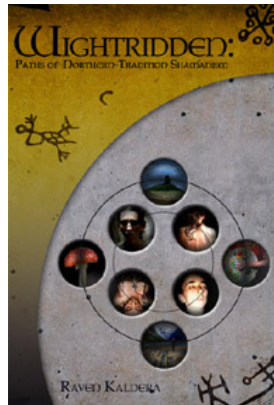
Kaldera uses the term *Bagsaghui* which is a Mongol shaman term for spirit taught, the source of the techniques in this work. They come directly from personal experience with shamanism and with the spirits and gods themselves. The term *wightridden* means spirit ridden and emphasizes the role of spirit interaction and spirit possession within northern shamanism.

As Kaldera explains, shamans are always different and set apart from others. If we consider the tale of the Volva in *Eric the Red's Saga* she is respected but feared. They offer whatever she requires and appreciates the work she does but cannot wait for she to leave !

The focus of this book is on the eight techniques of Northern Shamanism – meditation, ritual, rhythm, asceticism, sacred plants, flesh (sexuality), ordeal and horsing (possession). Each has its risks and benefits and most shamans will only ever master a few. Shamanism is goal based and therefore techniques should be used for a reason and not simply for ego, you should examine your motives and make sure you are undertaking a given technique for the right reason.

Meditation is the first technique; it includes a myriad of practises including traditional meditation techniques and breathwork, faring forth, Utisetä or out sitting and mould sitting.

Ritual and the creation of sacred space is very



Mongol Shaman with Drum and Cloak

significant. However ritual should not simply be of a magical form but should also include devotional rites preferably on a daily basis. This section includes an excellent guide to the construction of rituals and various recanting rites which are the Anglo Saxon equivalent to smudging.

The path of rhythm includes the use of voice, dance and drums to achieve your goals. Combining songs with *rune Galdr* can be very successful as well as the use of drums and music to induce trance. The Saami create their own *Runebom* drums which have images of the world tree on them and this section includes an extensive guide to making your own drum.

The use of sacred plants is always controversial in shamanism, while this category certainly includes the use of mind altering substances it should not be reduced to this alone. It must be remembered that all plants have spirits, greenwights, and you should work with these allies. You should be careful what you use, know the risks and make informed decisions. You should propitiate the grandmother spirit of the plant species, grow it yourself, take care with doses, plan your recovery, set intent and respect the limits or taboos set by plant spirit. Green or plant trances are another interesting subject



Runebom

covered in this section.

This is followed by a true extensive study of The Little Red Man (Fly agaric) in history as well as lots of details of its practical use in spirit work.

Asceticism is a demanding path focused on discipline. There are many forms including purification by heat such as sauna and purification by water. Fasting is another effective form. Sensory deprivation is traditionally used in the form of “going under the cloak”. This can be as simple or demanding as you require, an extreme practise can use rocks or dirt to weight you down but must sure you use assistants for safety. This section also includes a comprehensive history of the Sauna.

The section on Flesh or sex will be very challenging for some. So often modern books seem to have reduce sex magic to nothing more than intimacy manuals, not here. This section covers solo sex, sex with a partner and the use or a gondull or gandr, a phallic wand, for sexual purposes. It examines the clear fact that there are many forms of gender and sexual expression within northern shamanism including heterosexual, homosexual and gender/sexual variant, it is a lot more fluid that our modern dichotomous way of interpreting sex and gender.

Sex magick helps us develop our relationship with the gods and helps our own development. Vanir sex is fairly equalitarian, Aesir sex magick is far less so and more dominant while Rokkr sex magick is wild and unpredictable often with the magician being passive.

The section on the Ergi is a joy to read, it is marvellous to see this subject covered in such an insightful manner. In many shaman traditions the transformed gender variant shaman was considered the most powerful shaman of all, for example the Chukchi shamans talk about the initiation of becoming a soft man. There is a vast amount of historical information distilled into this chapter and it really deserves to be read, reread and digested. For those trying to understanding how to understand gender and sexual transgressiveness this is a comprehensive chapter. There does seem to be a high level of gender variance among underworld workers and those who work with the Rokkr. At the same time Odin is a very dark Aesir deity and regularly works with transgendered spirit workers.

The primary aspects of the Ergi include gender transgressing behaviour, gender transgressive sexuality and outsidersness caused by public variations of perceived roles. This section also includes number of powerful personal accounts of third sex Ergi experiences and spirit work.

The Path of the Ordeal is the use of pain and suffering to achieve spiritual growth. It is certainly not a path for everyone but is very effective for those who choose it. The aim is not damage to the body but to use pain to trigger a transformation of body chemistry resulting in an altered state. Pain can be used for various purposes including purification, a gift to the gods and hunting magic. Kaldera includes a comprehensive guide to the nine worlds of the Ordeal with details of the Gods and Spirits which create ordeals on each level. There are also sample Odinic ordeal rites.

The Path of the Horse is that of possession. It is a controversial path in the more general heathen community due to the possibility of deception. Kaldera includes some good hints on how to tell a fake from a real possession. There is also extensive coverage of the reasons we make use horsing, the six levels of deity assumption and a guide to Horsing the Gods of the Northern Tradition.

This is an astounding book packed with advice, hints and recommendations, it is eminently practical and offers a truly valuable guide to Northern Shamanism.

**The Elder Troth:
An Introductory
Course of Study
Kveldulfr Hagar
Gundarsson
The Troth**

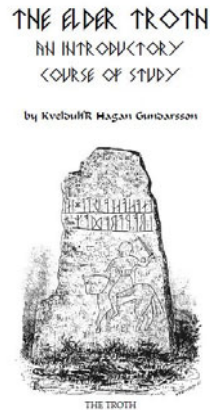
This is an introductory course in Asatru, aimed at opening a door on a living tradition not creating dogma or restrictions. It places a solid emphasis on the prose and poetic Edda and while a large amount of this material was written in Iceland it would be incorrect to suggest all of it originated there. The Havamal, for example, describes non-Icelandic animals such as wolves, bears and snakes and hence clearly has a non-Icelandic origin. While such texts are considered highly honoured they are certainly not inspired in a Biblical sense. Gundarsson also offers coverage of other sources both ancient and modern.

The book is composed of a range of lessons. Each lesson includes an overview, source readings and exercises, both intellectual and practical. There are an excellent recommended reading guides so you will come away with a good knowledge of the tradition and modern understandings of the northern way.

The lesson on the gods and goddesses is especially comprehensive discussing the evolution of the pantheon in terms of the various Germanic tribes over various periods. The myths and legends of the gods are complex and they cannot be easily defined or reduced to simple descriptions. The family of the gods is wide so you may not feel drawn to all of them and indeed may only choose a couple of patron deities. Of course there are also the wights from elves to giants.

Also included is a good introduction to the blot, sumbel and only forms of worship. Ethics are a significant aspect of the Troth and Gundarsson discusses the importance of bravery, truth, honour, good faith, self rule, hospitality, hard work, freedom and steadfastness.

The chapter on the soul and the afterlife looks at the many complex aspects of the Self in the



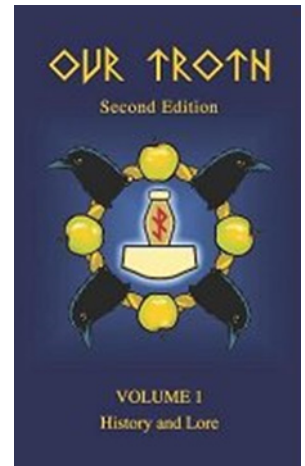
northern tradition. It also considers the legends regarding Valhalla and discusses that the supposed dualism between Valhalla and Hel was injected by Snorri Sturluson under Christian influence.

This short volume also continues with an outline of the training and procedures of The troth.

Web: <http://www.thetroth.org/>

**Our Troth
Volume One:
History and Lore
Compiled by Kveldulfr
Hagar Gundarsson
The Troth**

Our Troth was first published in 1993 by Kveldulfr Hagar Gundarsson and became an instant classic, for some years it was in great demand but hard to find. In line with the development of new knowledge in heathen scholarship the new edition comes in two volumes and is incredibly comprehensive. The first volume covers history and lore and is illustrated with both drawings and photos.



The history opens with an extensive overview of Germanic cultures right back to prehistory. It is academically credible and sympathetic to our heritage and the number of references shows the exacting research underlying this work. The importance of these links cannot be underestimated since our reverence for the ancestors and a shared heritage can be linked to the early European origins of our peoples. Indeed some 95% of Europeans can be traced back to seven European ancestors according to Sykes in *Seven Daughters of Eve*.



PETROGLYPH FROM BORGE, NORWAY



BARROW AT NETHER LARGIE, PHOTO, JENNY BLAIN

This is followed by a significant and comprehensive discussion of archaeology, culture and spirituality. Stone Age religion is well considered and gives a good background as it provides the earliest roots of the northern traditions. There is also a sensible and critical look at the myth of the great goddess where the supposed matriarchal cultures were overrun by violent Indo European hordes. The detail in the historical sections is truly impressive and rivals any academic text. There is some debate about when Indo European culture appeared some would date it to around 3200 BCE. To appreciate this early Indo European culture we get a crash course in language and social structure, kinship and religious structures. There is a good discussion of the conquest versus diffusion debate and a speculative re-creation of Indo European belief and practised based on current research.

Following from an overview of the Indo Europeans we move to the Bronze Age ancestors of Germanic culture. While it is probably best not to define these European cultures as Germanic they certainly have much in common including ritual practise with what comes later.

The Iron Age offers a comprehensive history of the Celts, Germans as well as the development of the runes and deities. Many see the Germanic traditions to be primarily of Iron Age origin. The Iron Age also marks the development of the warrior culture and this leads to an interesting discussion of Roman Germanic interactions on military, spiritual and cultic levels. This comprehensive history continues through to the Christianisation of the tribes and our loss of tradi-

tions. A classic example being Charlemagne's Genocidal wars against the heathen Saxons. There is a solid section on England since it holds a special place in the history of our folk. Scandinavia of course also played a significant role in regards to archaeological finds and runic carvings.

The Viking age is critically and intelligently examined in that so often the troth is only seen through the lens of this period and its significance is overplayed.

Chapter 7 offers the oft unknown tale of how the old ways survived underground through times of Christian dominance. Which there certainly was not an unbroken transmission of the old ways, it is surprising to see just how much did survive through myth and legend. A thorough examination of Sagas and source materials is offered including early scholarly research including the work of Grim and the National Socialist perversions of the Volk traditions. Continuing to examine the revival of the tradition, there is an examination of post WWII groups, from Alexander Rud Mills to Thorsson's *Ru-nelore*. There is a reliable outline of modern Asatru, Theodish and Runic groups.

After this truly extensive history we move into the lore starting with gods and goddesses, the three functions and the relations between the gods and us. This is followed by a comprehensive examination of each of the gods and goddesses. Each section is extremely comprehensive and packed with historical and academic references. I was impressed by the very balanced coverage of Loki and controversies regarding his role in Asatru.

There are also interesting discussions of Freyr and Seidr magic as well as good





AEGISHJAMR FLOWER BED, CIVIC CENTER PARK, SAN FRANCISCO

coverage of lesser gods and goddesses, Etins, Elves, Disir and other beings. Current issues in Asatru such as the relationship between the Aesir and Vanir, giants and Aesir are also discussed as well as environmental and social issues.

An extensive introduction is given to the cosmology of the World covering both models of Yggdrasil, the plain and the tree as well as the wells, roots, branches, the origins of time and the nature of Ragnarök.

The soul in the Northern tradition is not easily understood. It is a complex subject very well covered including discussions of the soul, death and various approaches to the afterlife. Both Anglo Saxon and Norse soul lore are extensively discussed.

Virtues are significant within the heathen life and the model of the Nine Virtues as elucidated by the Odinic Rite are discussed in some detail. These virtues are Boldness, truth, honour, loyalty, self rule, hospitality, industriousness, independence and steadfastness. Of course there are various others including wisdom.

Volume One ends with an excellent book board.

Our Troth
Volume Two:
Living the Troth
Compiled by Kveldulf Hagar Gundarsson
The Troth

Our Troth Volume Two "*Living the Troth*" focuses on the way the Troth is practised. Section

One "Living Tru" discusses a range of issues. It opens with the relevance of the living earth. While the gods and goddesses are not personifications of natural forces they do express themselves through the many facets of nature. We need to regain an appreciation of sacred sites and the wights and spirits of place, we also need to understand the importance of heath and wilderness.

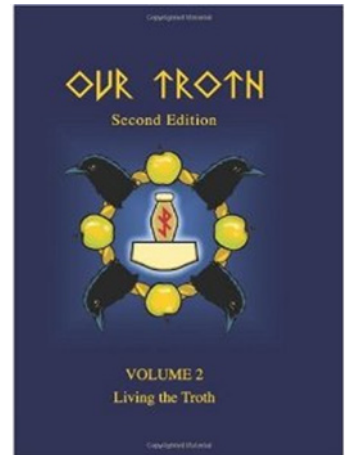
In Troth and Heritage the thorny issue of the folk vs universalist controversy is debated and a scale is offered showing the various gradations between these two poles of thought. It is certainly still a major point of contention within the community.

Extensive coverage is also given to current debates about race and genetics which illustrate the different positions in the Asatru community on the subject.

Tribal Traditions offers a sampling of approaches from different tribal traditions including Theod, The Troth and various others. The tribal approach has developed from the desire to create strong heathen communities based on the beliefs of our ancestors as opposed to modernist and Christian values.

Tribes often have a specific patron deity and festivals and forms specific to that tribe. Sacred leadership is significant with a stricter interpretation of beliefs than found in general Asatru.

Theod as a specific tribal form is one of the better known and popular. The Theod traditions are based on the or precedent



6th century Gothic brooch, Nuremberg, Germany

which are not seen as laws but “how traditionally things have been done” including traditions about sacral kingship, oaths and worship of the Germanic gods. Theod uses far more reconstruction practices including language, forms and rites and is sometimes called retro heathenry.

From Heath to Hof and Heathens and the Law takes a more specific look at development of groups from the perspective of The Troth. Suggestions and guidelines are offered including those for dealing with the public and media and a detailed examination on what a traditional hof would be like if you decide to build. The second chapter covers legal matters and other issues related to state and law.

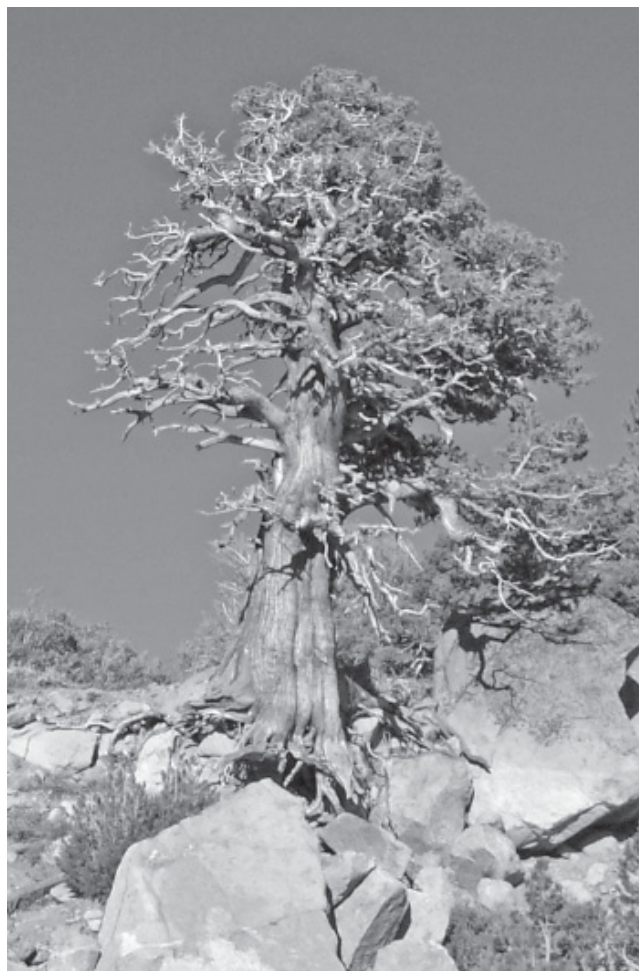
Part Two: Rites and Practices

The many ways of worship are discussed including prayer and sacrifice. The issue of animal sacrifice is openly discussed since offering animals is sometimes undertaken on farms owned by Asatru, it is a way of sanctifying the food that is consumed. Personal and collective rites, altars and honouring the gods are also covered in some detail.

Writing Blots is an informative chapter on how to design your own rites followed by discussions of practical issues such as language, timing, ritual tools etc. There are reflections on intelligently dealing with alcohol and behavioural issues at rites or moots. This is followed by a discussion exploring aspects of ritual not often seen covered such as the use of theatre, voice and character development, it is very informative.

Rites of Passages looks at rites such as naming, initiatory coming of age rites for men and women and marriage rites including same sex unions. Death and burial discusses legal questions as well as “midwifing the soul through death”, the last ale and holding a wake.

The Holy Tides is a very comprehensive coverage of holy feast days, festivals and seasons. There is more than enough information to create a complete heathen calendar. The following chapters look at the seasons and festivals in greater detail with superb historical explorations of key themes.



*“Mimameith is it called and no one knows
from what roots it rises.”*

Svipdagsmál: 20

It is also suggested that such rites can be supplemented by daily rites to imbue our everyday lives with heathen sacredness and sample rites are offered. Other practises covered are Sumbels, oaths, hallowing including the well known Hammer Rite but other methods as well.

The book finishes with extensive resources including a Futhark chart, an extensive pronunciation guide, a comprehensive word hoard with definitions and a heathen bookshelf which is lifetime superbly annotated and a book hoard. These book lists will give you a lifelong addiction to reading and create the basis of an amazing heathen library.

These volumes are written collectively by members of The Troth with their names listed at the conclusion of each section. They have been compiled by Kveldulf Hagar Gundarsson.

Northern Traditions

Edited by Gwendolyn Toynton

Primordial Editions (2011)

Web: <http://www.primordialtraditions.com>

For many, Traditionalism has been seen as primarily aligned with various mainstream religious traditions as expressions of the Sophia Perennis. This model is found in the work of such authors as Rene Guenon and Frithjof Schuon. For Julius Evola Traditionalism was to be expressed via a more active if not warrior ethos and the combination of this view and the rise of Asatru gave rise to what has been called Radical Traditionalism, which is really a form of Heathen Traditionalism. For many who question the monotheistic traditions yet are not enraptured by the shallowness of modern neo paganism this has opened a new and vital path. Tyr and other related journals began this exploration in this modern period and it is marvellous to see Primordial Traditions offering a volume in this field.

The volume is divided into *Traditional Practise* and *Contemporary Practise* and offers an excellent selection of articles. It continues the same high level of scholarship and erudition as the *Primordial Traditions Compendium* published in 2009. Just some of the papers that caught my attention include....

Gwendolyn Toynton's introduction reminds us of the insanity by which we live, hyper capitalism, global warming and overpopulation is destroying the earth at the same time we are forgetting who we are. While other indigenous peoples celebrate their culture we have forgotten our own even though it stares us in the face. Her impassioned introduction reminds us of the imperative need to re-examine our lives and return to our traditions, for many, including myself, this is within the ethnic heritage of the northern tradi-



tions. While reconstructing the tradition and removing the pernicious influences of Christianity may be fraught with difficulties the alternative is not worth thinking about.

In *Twilight of the Gods* Toynton then provides a truly insightful examination of the wolf age

and its relation to the primordial tradition in terms of cyclic time as also expressed in the Hindu tradition. Rather than being Christian influenced this tradition is clearly an expression of the primordial wisdom in a northern mythic form. She offers an excellent correlation of Hindu and Eddic traditions of the four ages and an erudite look at Odin and Loki in terms of both scholarship and the primordial tradition offering significant insights. Odin is presented as a gestalt archetype reconciling various characteristics and this presentation is pregnant with meaning and worth contemplation.

Toynton's exploration of Loki is also very revealing and resists current trends towards reductionism when examining a very complex outsider figure. This is followed with a look at Ragnarök as outlined in the Volupsa. This is a very extensive esoteric decoding of Ragnarök looking at mythic themes and their meaning in terms of mankind's future.

Matt Hajduk looks at the Germanic god Forseti and a traditional view of the legal and civil ethos. He offers extensive coverage of all the tales and lore related to Forseti with a solid historical context. While Tyr may be the general god of justice Forseti seems to govern specific nuances within tribal and religious law and while Tyr had military associations Forseti was the god or chairmen of The thing.

The role of The Thing and the concept of traditional law was of major significance in medieval Iceland. Iceland had no centralized government but worked from the gathering of the Althing.

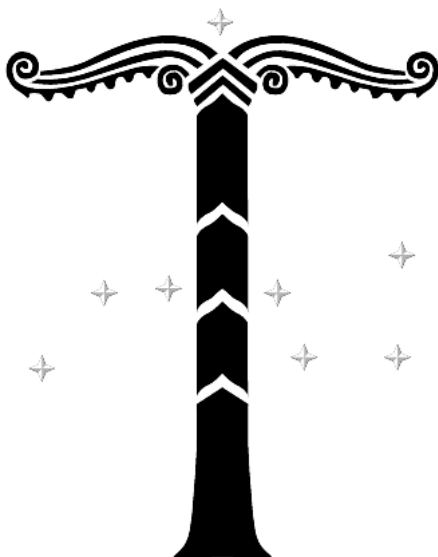
The primary role of law was not to impede



personal freedom but to resolve feuds which developed over the limited resources in what was a harsh environment. Other issues relating to honour were also of great significance. From this model common law developed first orally and then written which gave maximum liberty balanced with the need to avoiding the possible bloodshed of a feud.

These laws which became known as the grey goose laws helped develop a surprisingly sophisticated series of courts and Things right up to the Althing. As part of this system was the use of alliances, where a landholder would align with a chieftain through a thing bond and these bonds slowly became structures for arbitration and conflict resolution. Agreements were significant and could result in the killing of the offending party or outlawing if disregarded. Ultimately the Icelandic free state collapsed due to a concentration of too much power in the hands of too few chieftains. In our modern world this warning and the tribal model of law begs to be considered.

In *The Mountain Kings* by Juleigh Howard-Hobson we are introduced to the recurring myth of the king who remains sleeping in a mountain or cave. It is a classic European mythic motif and is listed as myth number 766 in the AT myth classification system. Of course King Arthur is the classic example of such a tale, others include the legends of the Lindow man which were strangely turned into fact when the Lindow bog body was found. While there are many variations, myths and legends they do seem to have an overarching similarity and be related to Arthur.



What is Best in Life reflects on that most important northern virtue honour., while Amy Ahlberg offers us a herbal study on ravens foot and other poisonous warrior plants in what is a truly fascinating piece. Reflecting on Paracelsus she considers them in both a herbalist and spiritual context. The historical details alone are a joy to read.

Matt Hajduk offers another superb essay, this time on the regularly underestimated figure of Tyr. Tyr seems from the very earliest Indo European sky god including being represented in the Rig Veda. It was only faulty later scholarship which overlaid him with mars and detracted from his significance. Tyr was clearly the sky god prior to Odin in the Germanic tradition and this paper explores Tyr through many cultural forms and expressions. In many traditions he is depicted as a one handed sword god and indeed the god of swords. In the Germanic tradition he is also related to the north or pole star and the world pillar or Irminsul. Tyr is often seen as a war god yet he is more often represented as a jurist or god of arbitration. He is the god of the Tiwaz rune and the legend of how he lost his hand is well known by students of Norse mythology.

Vijay Prozack offers a distillation of the basic philosophical motifs behind the northern tradition in a clear and thought provoking manner.

Contemporary Practise is the second section of the book and offers some fascinating essays to consider.

Stephen Borthwick handles that thorny issue of folksiness without racism. While in *Rune Song* by S.R Hardy we receive a beautiful and poetic exploration of each rune.

This is followed by an insightful essay on cyclic time and the nature of the golden age and the importance of the great hero or Kalki avatar in the Kali Yuga as related to the authors research into the hooded man, Son of Herne.

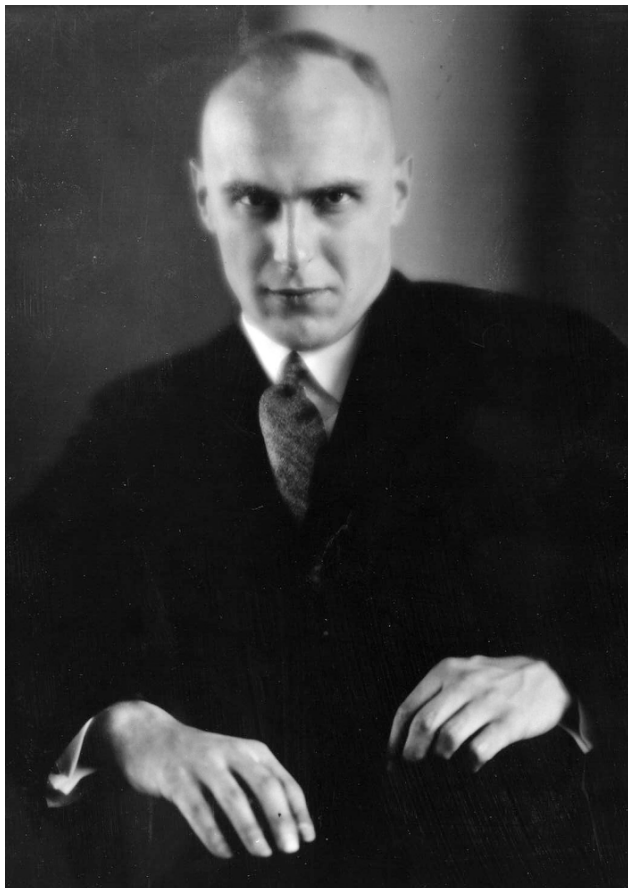
Christopher smith offers a thought provoking discussion of the trials and pitfalls of reconstructing the northern way. The book ends with an essay by Troy Southgate on the divine centre from a Wotanist perspective with a well written and useful rite.

It Cannot Be Stormed
Ernst von Salomon
Arktos (2011)

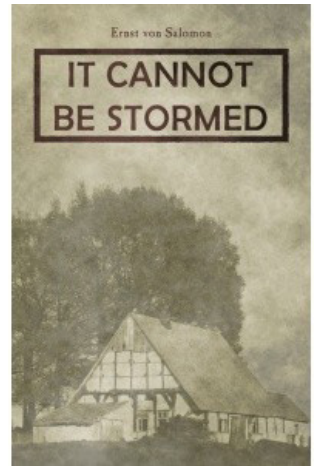
Von Salomon was a conservative revolution author living through the Weimar republic and the Third Reich. This unusual and challenging work explores the political ideals of the period, its compromises and losses. It is written at a certain distance as though from someone who has moved from activist to observer and perhaps now is living in Julius Evola's terms "Riding the Tiger".

It is an arresting and thought provoking work. Its imagery is striking and brings the imagination to life. His writing style is unusual and envelopes the reader with characters, images and ideas, it is a very original and innovative work.

It is written in a deeply evocative style which brings to life true rural living in tune with nature as opposed to debt ridden city living. It emphasizes Land, race, family and tradition as opposed to the new incoming political systems. It explores the invasion of taxation, technology and the encroachment of mechanization and factory style production on farm life.



Claus Heim leads the farmers in direct action to protect their livelihoods but government bureaucracy under the pressure of reparations of WWI will not budge. Heim needs a man of conviction who can write and hires Ive who has run a number of papers including the Iron Front to work with him. The new publication fighting for the rights of farmers was called The Peasant.



The Peasant went through many crises but finally Ive realized the basic issue of farming property was the tip of the iceberg, German society as a whole must change. Of course such suggestions could not go unanswered and Ive and others are charged with treason. Slowly news is distorted, firecracker became bombs and ideologues want to co-opt the movement. Fury followed on fury and bombs. The desire to sustain a clear vision became more and more difficult while many seem akin to his vision he never quite trusts their political solutions. As the government attacks the farmers more and more radical movements are blamed from the ns to the communists, confessions are manipulated and the truth lost in bureaucracy.

The town represents the emptiness of civilization as opposed to the naturalness of the land and comradeship of true friendship. The town is shallow and soulless and Salomon evokes this in poetic detail. Small groups meet and dissolve and ideas were discussed but with little to no results, political parties offer so many seeming solutions but ultimately come to nothing or worse compromise their visions with dire results. He tries to find a sense of connection with these movements but ultimately is left only with his sense of belonging to the land and loyalty.

This is an enigmatic novel which is both politically informative and at the same time somewhat pessimistic. The author expresses the dreams and hopes of those counter revolutionaries of the conservative revolutionaries which were so betrayed by both the left and the right. It is a powerful and moving experience and certainly worth reading.

Don't Forget
P.D. Ouspensky's Life of Self Remembering
Bob Hunter
Bardic Press
Web: <http://bardic-press.com>

I have always found the Fourth Way of exceptional interest and felt that Ouspensky offered one of the more lucid presentations of the work. It is excellent to see a volume which explores Ouspensky's life, work and legacy in an informed and sympathetic light. Many see Ouspensky only in the shadow of Gurdjieff yet in so many ways the most lucid accounts of the Fourth Way come via Ouspensky's various published works. Rodney Collin saw him as a truly conscious man codifying the teaching in a coherent manner, while others were not so sympathetic.

Sadly many biographies are based on students who left Ouspensky before the last six months of his life and are hence incomplete or biased. Collin and others believe this last period was of the highest awareness for Ouspensky and hence should not be ignored. Most published biographies take sides on the personality clash between Gurdjieff and Ouspensky and refuse to see Gurdjieff's erratic behaviour as having a role in the process. The scapegoating of Ouspensky is a shame as it takes away from his many achievements and incredible hard work in transmitting the Fourth Way. Hunter offers one of the most balanced and perceptive biographies to date. It is very well written bringing together many unpublished biographical details



with Fourth way teachings as part of the narrative.

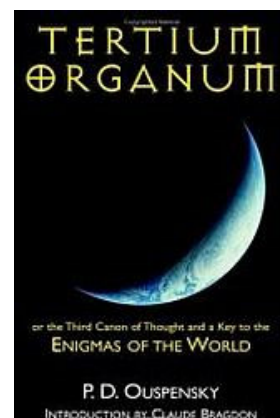
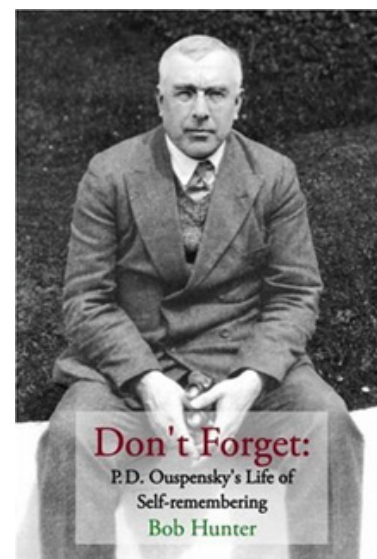
Hunter offers a comprehensive history of Ouspensky's work, before and after Gurdjieff, his rejection of popular acclaim and desire to escape the continuing repetitive cycles of life eternal re-occurrence.

Ouspensky believed that heightened awareness could break through mechanical thinking and achieve a detached state of objective consciousness. For Ouspensky the concept of reoccurrence and higher dimensions were additional interpretations of the Fourth Way offering a theoretical frame for how to change base emotions into higher emotional states.

As Gurdjieff said of a student he is never at home, we must live life with meaning, with presence and awareness in every moment. To do this requires us to admit life has no inherent meaning and that we create it. This requires sacrifice and constant effort.

Hunter offers an extensive discussion of the titles which Ouspensky wrote prior to meeting Gurdjieff. Personally I have always found these works exceptional and it is nice to see them evaluated in an objective manner, *Tertium Organum* is a prime example. It was this work which gave Ouspensky the edge to present The Work in a way suitable for western students. Ouspensky emphasizes the limits of the three dimensions of matter and the nature of the fourth dimension as time.

Our lives are like a constantly repeating movie with consciousness as the light. Our many selves are just aspects of the film; we must find



the objective consciousness which exists in the eternity beyond the fourth dimension of

time. It is a fallacy to see ourselves as a united being, we have many selves and must forge a true I through true spiritual activity.

Art and architecture are an expression of soul much like a movie projected from an unknown source. Concentration can be used to increase the clarity of the meaning to a work and hence divine its significance. This approach to art and architecture is a unique addition that Ouspensky brought to the Fourth Way.

Self-remembering as well as sacred dervish dances (which Gurdjieff later adapted into his movements) can be used as a means to become awake and escape eternal reoccurrence. The enemy of awareness is the state of mechanical thinking. Dissatisfaction is an absolute necessity in that it helps us avoid the pitfall of happiness which leads to complacency.

Ouspensky's models of multiple dimensions in *The New Model of the Universe* may take some effort to follow but are ultimately rewarding and contained insights way beyond the time they were written. This model is intricately connected with eternal reoccurrence and the multiple selves which in a haphazard way make up the average person.

"I began to feel a strange uneasiness, as though I had forgotten something. And suddenly I remembered that I had forgotten to remember myself."

P.D Ouspensky

whim of outside influences until learns to be. People are

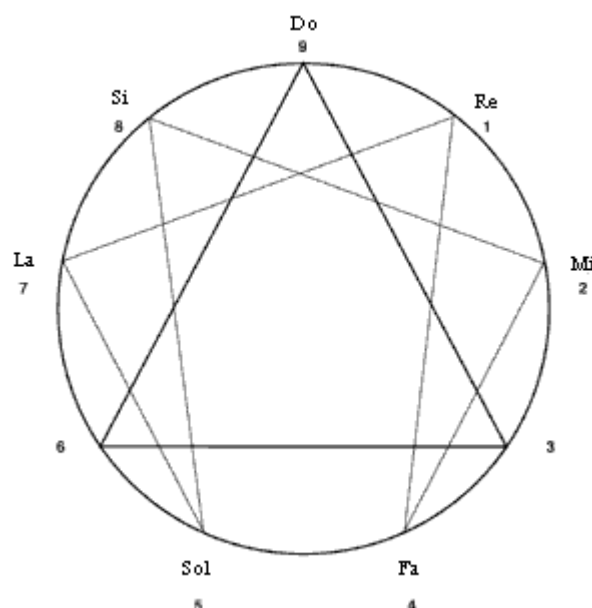
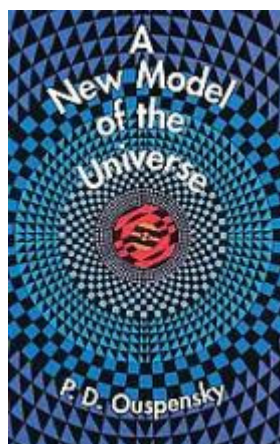
asleep both in

their supposed waking and sleeping states. To grow requires true effort and total honesty with yourself and in a Work group, a group is important since together more can be achieved than alone.

The key to becoming awake is self-remembering; which is a third state of consciousness beyond sleep and everyday sleep (supposedly awake). The goal of self-remembering is objective consciousness, the fourth state.

When Ouspensky broke with Gurdjieff he expressed the system in a different form. However as Hunter makes clear it is just not the case that he stymied the transmission and development of The Fourth Way. Indeed he was a highly significant link in its survival. Rodney Collin and Maurice Nicoll, students of Ouspensky, made immense strides in the presentation of the work and hence Ouspensky's role as a teacher demands more respect. Ouspensky's reason for the break are unclear but Gurdjieff's personality, authoritarian style and the fact that it was perceived that Gurdjieff was moving The Fourth Way in a monastic if no religious direction are some suggested.

Some years later he re-joined Gurdjieff, at this





Rodney Collin

stage Gurdjieff was working on his ballet *The Struggle of the Magicians* and on dervish dance which focuses consciousness so that higher states of awareness became possible.

Ouspensky met John Bennett and they discussed the seven types of man and higher dimensions and

how these could be represented. Gurdjieff advised him that even if you could represent these higher dimensions mathematically it doesn't really mean very much if you cannot enter them at will.

Gurdjieff travelled to France and opened his Institution for the Harmonious Development of Man by this stage Ouspensky felt unable to join leading to a final parting of the ways. Ouspensky now taught his own approach to the work which was well received by his many students. Over time Ouspensky tried to find the origins of the system believing that Gurdjieff had lost contact with the original form.

Others such as Beryl Pogson has suggested that the teachings are always presented in a fragmentary ways and hence this avoids easy access to the work. There has always been much debate about the origins of the system and its presentation.

Hunter offers a very comprehensive history of Gurdjieff Ouspensky interactions, as well as the work of Mott, Bennett and others.

Ouspensky discovered that students did not see the teachings as new but constantly tried to interpret them in terms of their own habituated past learning. Hence the concept of mechanicalness is the key to the system. Hunter offers a summary of the lectures in which Ouspensky used to introduce the system and these are

quite invaluable.

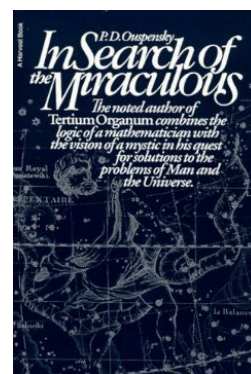
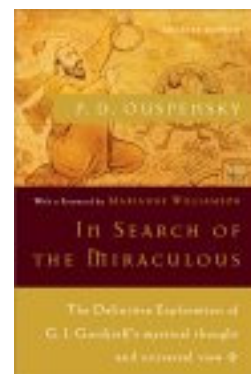
This is followed by a history of Ouspensky's experience in America prior to returning to England. When Ouspensky returned to England he claimed he had abandoned the system as presented by Gurdjieff and was to transmit his own form of the work. He argued that the basic concepts of *The Work* were correct but students must rebuild the rest for themselves and appreciate that *The Work* is far bigger than most previously thought. Whether this was a deliberate provocation to break student's habituated thinking or a real revelation about the system leading up to his death is a matter of con-

jecture. However Collin and many others believe he reached a high state of awareness prior to his death and died consciously.

After Ouspensky's death many students returned to Gurdjieff while others joined groups led by Ouspensky's students. Today, books by Ouspensky on *The Work* such as *Fragments of an Unknown Teaching* and *In Search of the Miraculous* are considered the best presentations of the Fourth Way in print by many.

Journey to the centre is reflective look at Ouspensky's work and other students as they interpreted the Fourth Way. The following chapter looks at the esoteric concept of Judas in a spiritual system and whether Ouspensky used the process of abandoning the system and taking the role of "Judas" as a form of shock.

This is a fascinating work, filled with significant biographical and practical information. It is a fine exposition of aspects of the Fourth Way as expounded by Ouspensky and is a must read for anyone interested in *The Fourth Way*.



The Gods Remain

Thomas Sefton

Kolonos Press

Web: <http://www.kolonospress.com>

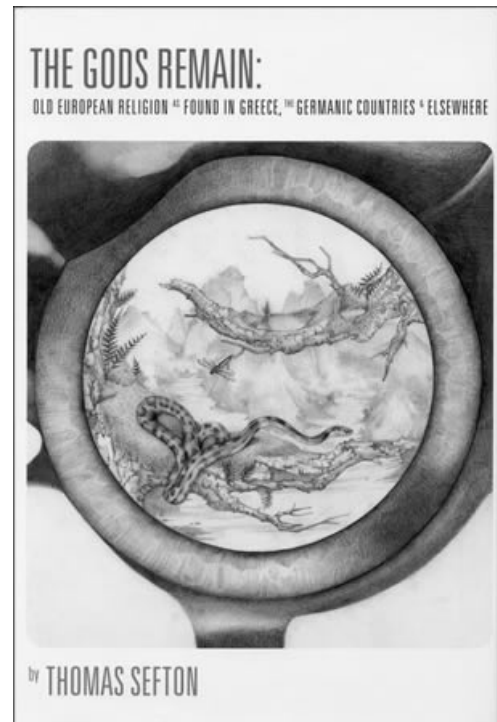
Thomas Sefton offers an unusual exploration of the world of classical Greece and the ancient Icelandic Sagas. He takes us on a journey to find the ancient knowledge which existed prior to such figures as Plato, Buddha and Jesus. He believes that the knowledge of this early period was and is of exceptional significance and indeed superior to that which came after. He searches for its resonance in the ancient Icelandic sagas and the stories of Greece especially the Tragedies and the Iliad.

Sefton argues that all religion is cult, but that the classic Greek tradition as embodied in the Iliad and the tragedies offer something different. In classic Greek culture there was no secular; every moment and every action was saturated with the divine and embodied the cycles of the divine. Sefton argues that prior to 500 B.C.E there was a singular tradition found in both the Greek and the Icelandic Sagas which was overtaken by the narcissism and consumerism represented by the cults which arose afterwards such as Christianity.

Sefton argues that this classic period cannot be approached cognitively and analysed from the



National Heritage Board, Stockholm

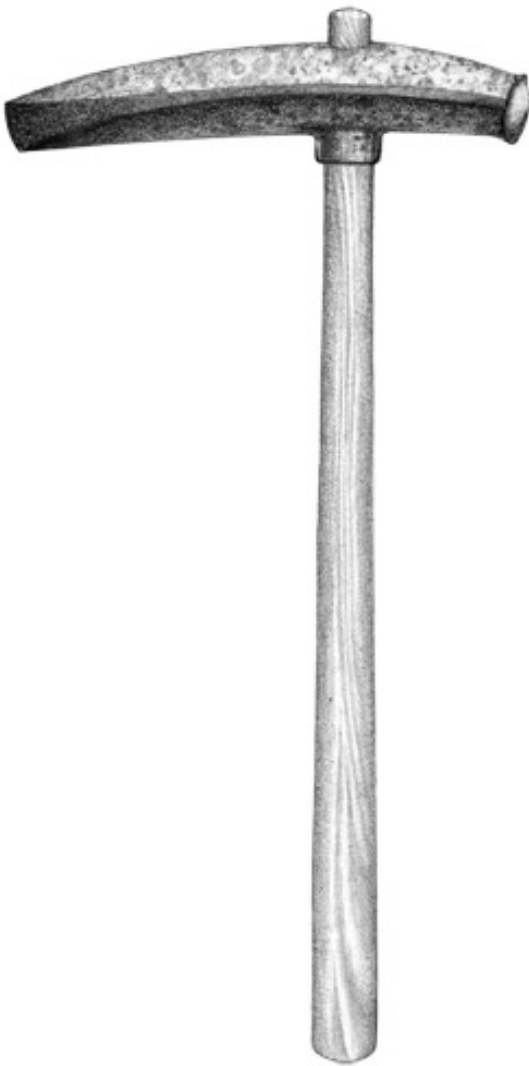


outside. We must get inside what the ancient's felt and thought. This is known as phreen or thinking through the gut since all classical works are a form of poetry.

Sefton explains this discovery through a very honest and personal account of his life and his realization that classical Athens was not centered on a rational worldview but an all-encompassing form of song or poetry which could be represented as Apollo.

He then explores the Iliad in some detail and offers a guide to this significant work as a living piece of literature not as a dry work of academic discourse. Sefton explores the Iliad as an expression of a perception and discusses how it was a compilation of older works combined to express the soul of the people. These earlier works were the Bardic songs of Aoidoi which had been repeated time and time again and slowly brought into a single narrative. Sefton argues we need to understand that the Iliad was meant to be sung and hence is presented with phrases which can be identified and used in different songs and presentations. This is why it, so often, it has unusual turns of phrase.

The bard did not learn his craft in an analytical nor was he taught, he would watch other bards and singers and like a child learning a language over many years absorbs their knowledge.



Stone Mace - Corded Ware Culture

The bard had no concept of the nature of history and literature, a tale was not told for political reasons but because it embodied something about the human condition, in this sense it was sacred.

Homer brought together the earlier accounts and as a master poet moulded them together to express their central meaning in the clearest way possible. There is much debate when the oral form of the Iliad moved to the written though Aristarches may have been the source of the first written form.

The Iliad remained a dynamic and creative process as it referred back to a unique moment in Time which was saturated with meaning.

Aristarches edited the Iliad to make it read as a printed work and divided it into twenty four books. This had a disastrous effect on what was essentially a living poem whose primary aim was not to record history but transmit meaning.

Sefton continues outlining the various versions of the Iliad and Plato's rather strange take on it. He believes that the Panathenaea was the first truly written formal form. He also discusses how Aristotle changed the way reality was perceived, from a point of reference in our own perception of a moment on time creating reality to physical objects being the points of reference in themselves.

This is a truly extensive work which continues to examine the history and archaeology which lead to the Iliad being written. This is then followed by Sefton's own lively version of the Iliad with various notes and references. He looks at Achilles as sacred man, a complete being embodying faith beyond reason who is much like hanuman in Ramayana.

Sefton then offers comparative studies of the Heroic in the Sumerian Epic of Gilgamesh and then moves onto Greek Tragedy.

He offers an extensive history of Greek tragedy from the goat tearing songs and rites of Dionysius to the forms of the fifth century. Sexton reconstructs the original Athenian vision which he sees as communicating directly without Christian filtering. He then offers a superb retelling of the tales of tragedy.

His research continues examining the affinities between Odin and Apollo and suggesting that the Greek and Germanic worldview represented one vision and that they were all part of one Indo European form of literature.

This is a challenging work which is clearly the result of a lifetime of research as well as sweat and tears. There is a vast amount of information packed into its pages and it is a work which must be contemplated rather than simply read.

His website has a range of interesting essays and papers available in addition to The Gods Remain for sale.

**Lost Knowledge of the Ancients
A Graham Hancock Reader
Edited by Glen Kleisberg
Inner Traditions (2010)**

The face of archaeology has been irrevocably changed by the work of a small group of mavericks. Robert Bauval, Graham Hancock, Robert Schoch and John Anthony West have not only come up with theories which have confounded the old schools of history, but have given birth to a whole new approach which could be seen as the new archaeology.

Their work has been well published and is highly documented while controversial and challenged by the mainstream. Since the publication of their first books more and more evidence has arisen to prove their conjectures. This volume brings together a series of essays which explores many aspects of this new domain with papers covering diverse subjects by many new authors. I will discuss some of the essays which especially grabbed my attention.

Robert Schoch opens the volume examining the

hard scientific evidence for parapsychology, discussing current debates and trends and debunking those who try to ignore the years of positive evidence.

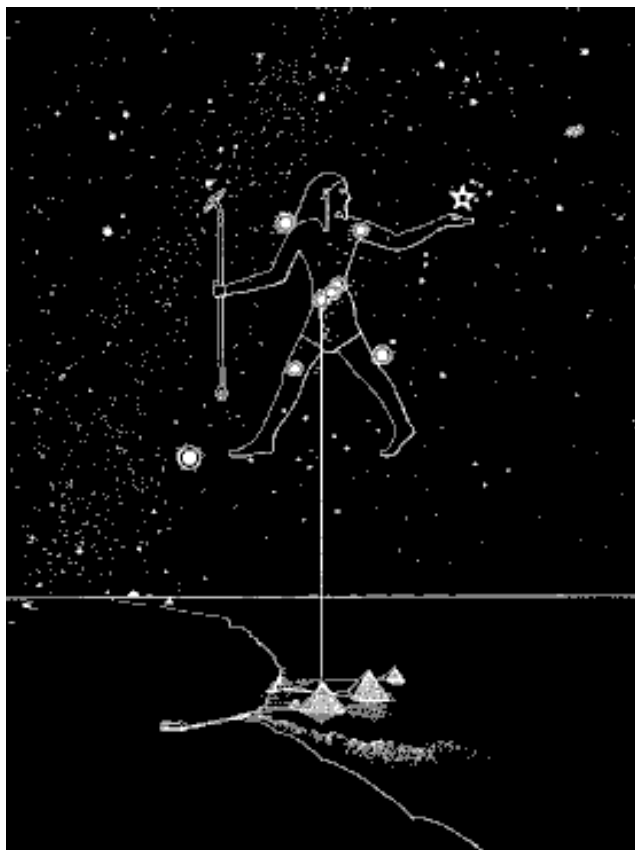
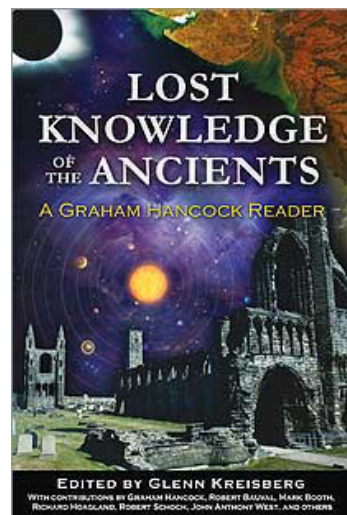
This is followed by a fascinating examination of the relationship between quantum physics and the

nature of consciousness in terms of the sacred science of Egypt as decoded by Schwaller de Lubicz. It especially focuses in on the nature of the divine man as embodied in the design of the temple of Luxor.

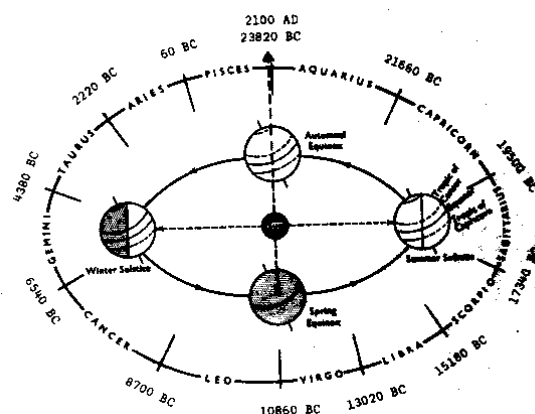
Robert Bauval examines one of the key platforms of the new archaeology, the astronomical alignments of the pyramids and temples of Egypt. The Orion Mystery was his original work, but now he has refined and expanded it with new research into the archeoastronomy of Egypt in his new book The Egyptian code.

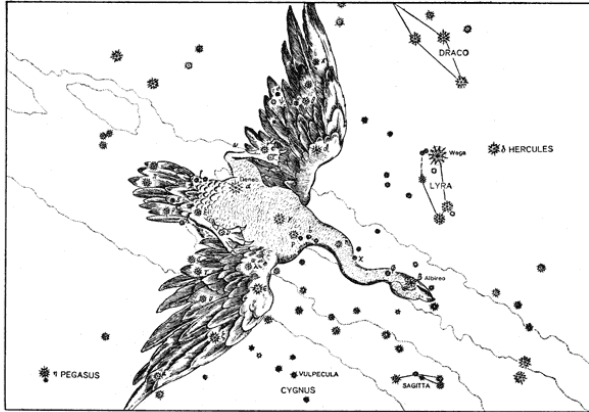
The next paper is quite an insightful reflection on the psychology of those who attack alternative archaeology. Mark Booth suggests this comes from the fact that it shakes their structured world and moreover asks deeper and at times esoteric questions. Booth has spent much time examining how the new archaeology and esotericism interrelates and this is the basis of his work.

Walter Cruttenden looks at the relationship be-



The Orion Correlation





tween the precession of the equinoxes and the rise and fall of civilizations and discusses how electromagnetic forces may influence consciousness and hence cause the relationship between cyclic time and human development. He looks at various models of cyclic time from Hesiod to the Yugas and their interpretation by Sri Yukteswar. I must add Sri Yukteswar way of looking at the Yugas is unusual and very different from most traditional interpretations.

Scott Creighton takes Robert Bauval's work further and offers more evidence of the Orion key. While Andrew Collins looks at what may have triggered man's evolutionary spurt of intelligence and comes up with a novel but well defended suggestion of cosmic rays. He posits Cygnus as the source of this cosmic radiation and discusses its great significance in legends and myth. He also considers how these rays may have been perceived by those in altered states of consciousness as religious or spiritual realities.

A reoccurring theme is that the ancients clearly knew a lot more than we give them credit for. Glen Kreisberg considers the evidence for an ancient knowledge of electromagnetism. From Mayan temples and reoccurring symbols to sites which seem to resonate and work as an early form of technological design. Kreisler provides an array of challenging evidence and asks did the ancients even have knowledge of wave propagation and know how to use it ?

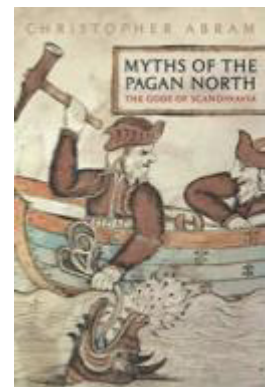
In chapter eleven we move in a totally different direction and examine a significant site off the coast of India which again pushes back the days for early civilizations beyond those of conventional archaeology.

Gary David shows us that Orion is not just sig-

nificant to the Egyptians but found reflected in Anasazi cities of Americas southwest. He proves an array of scientific evidence and examines how the Hopi and Egyptian cosmologies are marked by surprising similarities. Polar shifts are a fascinating subject and Flavio Barbiero looks at whether it is possible to have instantaneous shifts and what would cause them. While Conventional accepts that the poles have shifted, the question is whether they have the whole picture.

This superb and challenging volume ends with Graham Hancock looking at that hot issue of whether the first Americans included Caucasians, negroids and mongoloids. He presents a convincing array of evidence to back his claim of diverse migrations into America with the Kennewick man being a classic though controversial example.

Myths of the Pagan North
The Gods of the Norsemen
Christopher Abraham
Continuum 2001



Christopher Abram takes a critical approach to Norse mythology looking at the when, why and how of these great myth and placing them in a historical context while sustaining their integrity as a mythic tradition. He begins with the movement from oral to written myth and shows how these pagan tales survived the conversions to Christianity via adaptation and reinterpretation.

In the first chapter Abram examines in some detail the sources of Norse mythology focusing on the transformation of Norse myth through time rather than on the search for the "Ur myth" which seems to be the goal in more cross cultural mythic studies.

While archaeology generally does not intersect with myth, in terms of the Norse both picture stones and runic inscriptions can prove of great value. With written works the gap between the oral legend and the written form and the influence of the conversion process can make the decoding of the original myth difficult. In skaldic poetry the use of kennings and coded language



may of great beauty but the sheer complexity of the form often complicates the task of decipherment. Snorri Sturlsson's Edda is of great value to history, while he sustains a distance between his Christen belief and the old gods, diminishing them to great heroes or men he does not treat them as demons or evil spirits as other Christian authorities tended to do during this period. Abrahm offers a case study using Thor and the great serpent to examine the various sources available.

The way religion informs myth is controversial and contentious. In the myth and ritual school there is much debate about the significance relationship between myth and ritual with various scholars giving ascendancy to either form. Did seasonal rites create the legend or Osiris was the legend of Osiris interpreted through the lens of a seasonal rite? It is difficult to know for sure. While this approach is popular, especially when attempting to decode Norse mythology, Abram believes it demeans the power of the myth and it is hard not to agree. Abram offers an extensive examination of the sources for what we know about the Germanic traditions especially the accounts of Tacitus. He also examines the process of decoding cult centres through the



distribution of place names known as theophoric distribution. He also considers archaeological and funereal sources, and of course the Eddas. Myths in the Viking age focuses on early skaldic poetry starting with an extensive look at Bragi and then the skaldic poets that followed him. There are complex transmissions of myth which are hard to decode due to their fragmentary nature and that they assume a certain level of mythic background knowledge. These works also include beautiful and complex kennings, Abrahm offers decipherments of a wide selection of Kennings while many scholars will debate since it is hard to come to a conclusive interpretation.

Abrahm continues through Viking age poems offering a good selection of examples for us to ponder. He examines the background and content of both Norwegian and Icelandic sagas and their reflection of the migration to Iceland and the development of a new form of society. 950 to 1000 C.E. in Norway was a fertile period for myth and sagas as Christianity and the old ways reluctantly co-existed and then clashed with some favour. Abram continues his comprehensive analysis through the conversion period right up to 1350 C.E. with the saga revival and the production of Eddas.

Myths of the Pagan North combines a study of key themes, an excellent study of pagan religion and extensive examination of texts throughout each of the periods. This makes this volume of inestimable value for those desiring a historical grounding in Norse myth, poetry and the sagas.

**The Star Temple of Avalon
Glastonbury's Ancient Observatory
Revealed
Nicolas R Mann and Philippa Glasson
Temple Publications 2007**

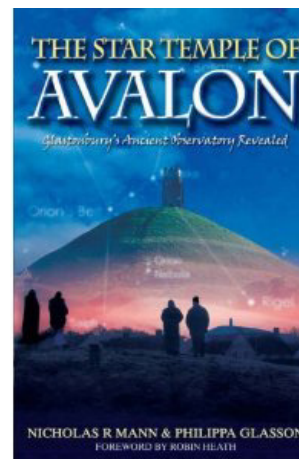
The very first thing I noticed about this volume is its superior presentation, superb printing with high quality figures and illustrations throughout helping the reader to understand a complex and demanding subject. This is a demanding read, yet the authors Mann and Glasson work to bring the subject alive and communicate its complexity with a high level of clarity.

While there has been a large amount of research done on the sacred landscape of Glastonbury one of the missing pieces of the puzzle has been in the field of archaeoastronomy. It is clear that the astronomy of the site influenced the prehistoric inhabitants and the later Celtic, Christian and monastic traditions of the area.

The movements of the sun and Sirius are of prime importance, they became congruent with each other and the site in 3150 BCE and this heralded the beginnings of the age of megalithic building. The Isle of Avalon in conjunction with various manmade structures provided a star temple to observe or perhaps more accurately experience the event. This site was used for a very long period and the star lore that was accumulated was orally transmitted leading to the alignments of other sites such as Stonehenge which have clear astronomical significance. This tradition is also found in the legends and myths of the region and the later Druidic tradition.

While many finds have been made showing habitation outside the site, the site shows no evidence of habitation inside its parameters going right back to the prehistoric period. This suggests a continuation of a place set apart, a unique sacred space. Modifications were made to the surroundings by the ancients to make it a star temple but with respect for its unique and sacred quality. Even when a later Christian church was built on the site it seems to have followed the convention as it was of a wattle and daub construction and a temporary building only. The Tor is Glastonbury's most notable feature; it is manmade in origin but hard to date. While it may have later agriculture use, its earliest origins are certainly not agricultural but sacred. It represents the imagery of the sacred

mountain with related astronomical use. Mann and Glasson explore in great detail the unique spiritual and astronomical connections to the many hills and sites which make up the Glastonbury region. Time and time again the unique astronomical characteristics of the various sites date to around BCE, a significant date since it predates much of the later megalithic construction.



The old pagan worldview related the lord of the otherworld or the great hunter Gwynn App Nudd with Orion with his hound Sirius with its constellation Canis Major. This integral view of culture, spirituality and people, land below and sky above is central to the meaning of Glastonbury. A significant aspect of this model is the alignments with the sun and moon. The moon is still celebrated in such a manner today with the Wicca rite of "Drawing Down the Moon". However this is just the beginning and the complexity of the site should not be underestimated. It is literally a star temple with many significant alignments, loaded with mythic and spiritual meaning. Mann and Glasson follow this with a comprehensive exposition of the early pagan myths and deities in terms of this early astronomy. The beauty and complexity of the ancient star lore is astounding including a model of the planets as represented through the Celtic gods. While some argue the ancients did not understand the precession of the equinoxes books such as *Hamlets Mill* by Giorgio de Santillana and Hertha von Dechend have challenged the orthodox view and led to a reappraisal of ancient astronomical knowledge. In regards to Glastonbury it does seem these ancient star watchers also understood this process. The volume ends looking forward from the esoteric wisdom of Glastonbury and discussing the challenges that future alignments will hold.

This is a challenging and informative volume, beautifully presented, superbly documented and adding a vast amount of knowledge to our understanding of Glastonbury and the wisdom of the ancients.

The Conspiracy against the Human Race

Thomas Ligotti

Hippocampus Press 2010

Man is a self conscious nothing

Julius Bahsen

The most merciful thing in the world, I think, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents. We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far.

The sciences, each straining in its own direction, have hitherto harmed us little; but some day the piecing together of dissociated knowledge will open up such terrifying vistas of reality, and of our frightful position therein, that we shall either go mad from the revelation or flee from the light into the peace and safety of a new dark age.

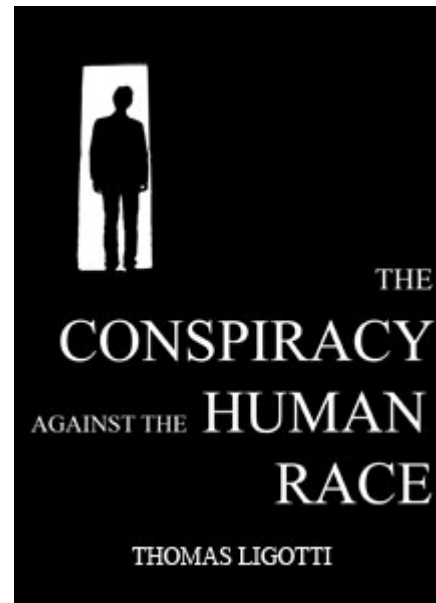
H.P Lovecraft

Thomas Ligotti is a highly successful horror writer and some years ago it became known he was producing a philosophical work. The Conspiracy Against the Human Race takes its name from a fictional book by a character in his story "The Shadow, the Darkness." A draft was released via his online site and then finally it was published by Hippocampus in 2010.

Conspiracy is a ferocious attack on the stupidity of humanity who lives in a state of denial about the true horrors of the world around them. It is a dark celebration of the limits of knowledge and the nihilism at the core of human experience. Many who have enjoyed Ligotti's fiction will find this work both compelling and confronting. The way he mixes discusses of horror literature with an existential critique of everyday life is masterful and insightful. He argues that individuals have no true values or beliefs and will change their minds for pretty well any reason. The only thing you can saw about humanity is its high opinion of itself and its inability to accept any criticism.

Thinking Horror

Man began as a headless being i.e. without consciousness or awareness. As consciousness evolved so did blind terror and fear, both external and internal.



Animals simply live, reproduce and die, humans are aware of the process and hence consciousness becomes distorted. Since our awareness is limited, we have no real control of our internal emotional states and we cannot really decode how much our experience of life correlates with the truth of the external world. We never really face death, we simply put it out of our mind, and denial is the key to our psychological survival. Our birth right is simply to survive, reproduce and die, everything else is a fabrication. Ligotti references *On the Tragic* and *The Last Messiah* by Peter Wessel Zapffe (both of which, sadly, are very difficult to find in English) and examines these in some detail.

Zapffe discusses how we pretend we are special and avoid the facts of life, he presents four means:

1. Isolation

Denying the facts or realities of life

2. Anchoring

Anchoring ourselves in false verities such as religion and politics

3. Distraction

TV is a good example

4. Sublimation

Creating artificial forms of meaning take the most confronting aspects of life and try to give them false significance.

Zapffe suggests that we accept the mistake of



consciousness and stop the assembly line of reproduction. Humans really only reproduce due to the pleasure of the act and the power associated with the ego creating a carbon copy of itself. This resonates with the anti reproductive vision of the Gnostics especially the Bogomils.

In many ways Ligotti's vision has much in common with the Buddhist worldview where everything is suffering and suffering is caused by attachment. This vision is also reflected in the work of Miguel de Unamuno who argues that consciousness is a disease created by the conflict of the rational and the irrational.

Ligotti explores these concepts in terms of many other authors including H.P. Lovecraft, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. He concludes that the world is filled with psychotics.

Facing Horror

Under the heading of enlightenment Ligotti offers a decidedly bleak but insightful interoperation of Buddhism and its focus on suffering. He also considers the work of U.G Krishnamurti who argues that enlightenment comes from accepting there is no way out. Ligotti then examines the various by-products of consciousness and our demands for meaning including intolerance, hypocrisy and the supremacy of a given worldview.

This search for meaning also creates the illusion of the happiness. Nietzsche understood that pain and suffering could be turned to inner strength, that nihilism means creating your own meaning but he is the exception, most of hu-

manity live in denial of their pain and meaninglessness and achieve absolutely nothing.

Consuming Horror

A blunt assessment of our denial of death and how we use all manner of distractions to ignore its final intrusion into all our lives. Tragedy, as expressed in so much of literature, is inevitably based on the insignificance of man.

Living Horror

Baudelaire, Lovecraft and Poe brought misery into a literary form, celebrating life negation as a new form of value. While humans try to use their psychological defences against the meaninglessness of life these do not always work hence depression results. This is not an illness but simply an awakening to the emptiness of existence and the flaw of consciousness which comes from our desire for meaning when the is none. We buttress our denial of death and unwillingness to face life with work and the accumulation of wealth.

Creating Horror

The creation of atmosphere in horror is like life extends backward from the terminus of death. As Lovecraft discusses in the introduction to *The Call of Cthulhu* we survive because we do not correlate all the contents of our mind. As science offers us more facts we will flee into a new dark age or go mad to escape the reality that unfolds before us. Ligotti continues examining character, Theme and other characteristics relating the nature of horror to the horror of the human condition.

This is certainly a unique work combing an exploration of horror in literature, nihilism and life negation in philosophy and the darkness inherent within the human condition.

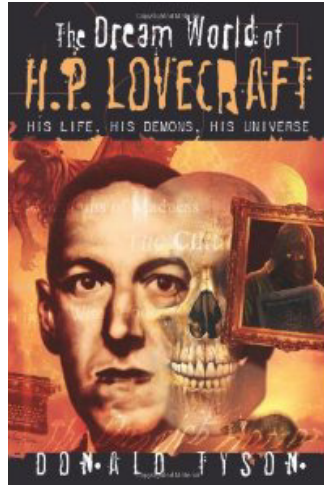
It is beautifully written, compelling and will be confronting for those used to living in the safety of their own illusions. For the daring soul wishing to use nihilism as a path to the Overman (Nietzsche), the Differentiated Man (Evola) or the Solar Body (Gurdjieff) this is a great place to start.

**The Dream World of H.P. Lovecraft
His Life, His Demons, His Universe
Donald Tyson
Llewellyn (2011)**

The Dream World of H.P. Lovecraft is an exploration of the world of the rational H.P. Lovecraft as well as of the visionary and dreamer. The contradiction between these worlds which existed at the centre of Lovecraft's life is what gave birth to his Chulthu mythos and the modern esoteric movements which have taken their lead from it. Lovecraft was a consummate lucid dreamer yet called himself an atheist denying the power of his dreams.

At the same time these dreams were so overpowering he had to put them into written form to exorcise their horror. This unique conflict between the rational and atheist waking state and the visionary dream state is what makes Lovecraft such a truly fascinating character.

He was a true outsider and lived in a world of

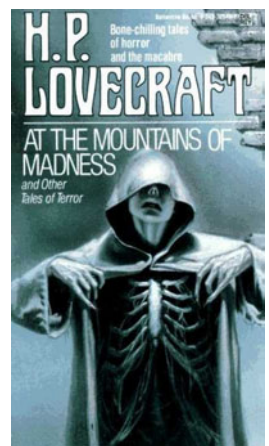
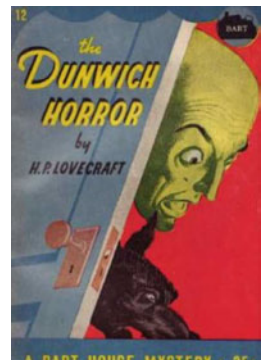
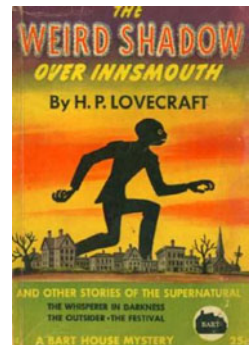


his own creation. It is from this nightmare realm, these dreams of cosmic horror that the Necronomicon Mythos developed. In this work Tyson alternates with chapters of biography with chapters on the mythos. It is a well written and challenging work which offers an honest biography coupled with an extensive examination of the esotericism of mythos and a history of Lovecraft's literary output.



Tyson digs up lots of information missed in other biographies. In 1921 for example, Lovecraft wrote an essay called A confession on Unbelief where he discussed his conversion to Greek paganism even to creating a small altar and offering sacrifices. It is intriguing that lovecraft twice took on special names (a bit like magical names) when he became absorbed into an esoteric tradition first Arabic the second time Greek. His exploration of Greek paganism was coupled by his study of astronomy which gave him a sense of the insignificance of man and perhaps this was the birth of his cosmic horror.

He had many childhood ailments, difficulties with sexuality and emotion, high intelligence, affinities for animals and problems with other



humans. Many suggestions have been made for these conditions Tyson offers a number of esoteric options but also thinks it fits Aspergers syndrome very closely. Whatever ailment caused his breakdown, he lived through five years of withdrawal from the world leading to the forging of two distinct personalities the atheist and rationalist and the dreamer and visionary.

The great centre of the Cthulhu universe is Azathoth the god of chaos and madness and clearly this was Lovecraft's greatest fear so he rigidly separated his rational and visionary compartments throughout his life. Indeed at times the rational attacked the other just as the visionary fed his night world with nightmares and horrors.

At times Lovecraft wondered if he could claim authorship since many of these tales seem to be written in his sleep and he simply transcribed them. Often they were associated with headaches, cramps and illness and had a decidedly mediumistic even shamanic quality. He came to realize he thought and dreamt differently than others and could control his dreams; today we would call this lucid dreaming.

Tyson offers a comprehensive overview of the Old Ones and the Necronomicon Mythos that slowly developed from Lovecraft's dreams. He certainly did not plan a coherent cycle of stories but as his dreams were put into writing this is what resulted. In Lovecraft's Mythos there is no god nor good or evil just strange pre-human creatures immensely old and from other world, times and dimensions. They are utterly alien to humanity and see us as insignificant. Many of these beings exist at the edges of reality but out of self-preservation we block out their presence.



The chapter on circle of correspondents is an extensive discussion of the many authors Lovecraft wrote with, ghost wrote for and corresponded with.

Lovecraft's atheism is unusual in that it is strongly pessimistic. He believes that the more we come to know the more the meaninglessness of our existence will unhinge our minds and our civilizations will fall into decay. This cosmic pessimism is central to both his supposed rational thinking and his fiction where beings from other dimensions leave mankind in a constant state of dread.

In his work the motif of dread is expressed through dreams, the past, the hidden and the outside. These are found in the dream worlds, other dimensions, variations of time and space. The past of reincarnation, lost civilizations, earlier lost kingdoms and races. The Hidden world of secret knowledge, old tomes, grimoires and dangerous texts and finally the outside. This can be knowledge or wisdom from outside or more often beings from outside our dimensions or reality.

Tyson examines the use of the Necronomicon and Cthulhu Mythos in modern magick and the various published works claiming to be the Necronomicon. Lovecraft's legacy may have begun in pulp horror and science fiction magazines but it continues today in the minds of many sorcerers and magicians and has triggered some of the most innovative forms of magic over the last fifty years.

Walt Whitman's Mystical Ethics of Comradeship
Juan A. Herrero Brasas
SUNY Press 2011

Most studies of Whitman have focused on his work solely as literature when it is clear spiritual and erotic themes abound in his work. For many years authors on Whitman attempted to ignore or deny his homosexuality and ignore the clearly esoteric themes present throughout his work. Whitman aimed no less to form a new religious mystical movement based on divine comradeship, this movement had both spiritual and revolutionary import.

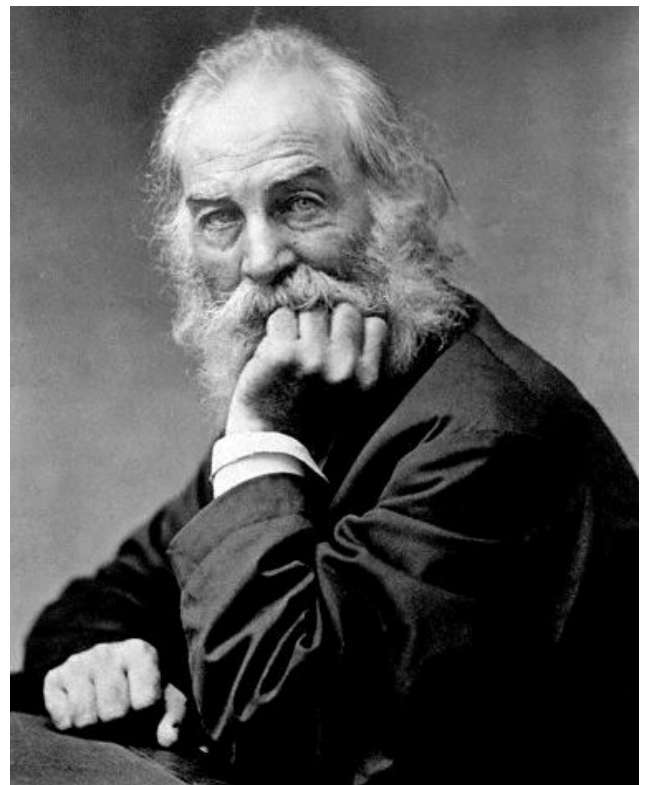
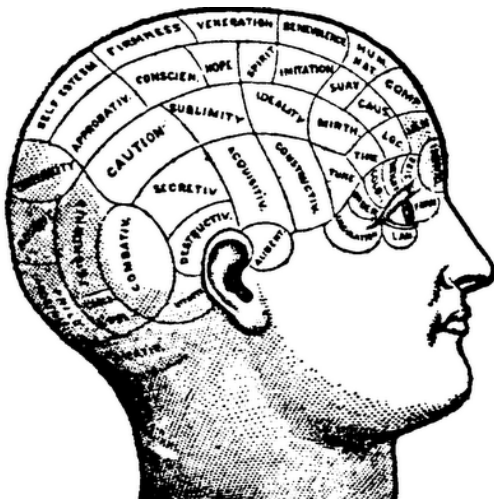
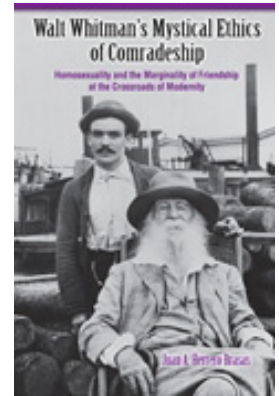
Leaves of Grass has primarily been studied as a literary work hence ignoring Whitman's prime intentions in writing it. While all his work was decidedly erotic; his heterosexual work the Children of Adam lacked the intensity of his same sex celebration in Calamus. Whitman developed his own unorthodox mystical system with a close circle of initiates, many of whom were homosexual men. Whitman despised mainstream churches and the clergy and based his work on his own direct experience of the divine. He expressed this vision in poetry and literature and believed there was no conflict between science and religion, taking a pantheistic position. Whitman postulated a trinity of democracy, science and a mystical form of religion. He also defined a square deific of four principles which includes the Christian trinity and Satan but expressed in cross cultural forms including Vedic and Greek deities. Evil was not rejected but understood as a necessary part of the path to perfection.

His circle of followers produced a wide range of works after his death including a well-received

magazine and his community continued for quite a period after his death. Indeed the Walt Whitman fellowship continued until 1958.

One of the more unusual influences on Whitman's spirituality was the pseudo-science of phrenology, however from a mystic perspective he was much taken by Emanuel Swedenborg. Whitman developed a mystique as a sort of new Christ constructed both by his disciples and in part by himself. At the same time Whitman saw himself and everyone as divine so we need to be careful in accepting the more messianic interpretation given by his acolytes.

Edward Carpenter, a homosexual socialist and revolutionary was a follower of Whitman as was John Symonds, the author of many works on Greek homosexual mysticism. Certainly the majority saw Whitman as some form of homosexual mystic though he never explicitly stated this himself. A major hypothesis is that Whitman transitioned from journalist to poet due a powerful mystical experience. This does seem to be backed by a study of his work but is still





hotly contested by scholars in the field.

Whitman placed a strong emphasis on the nature of beauty. The perception of beauty has been divided by Christian Neoplatonism which saw the body as suspect and classical Platonism which held the body in high esteem and saw beauty as an expression of divinity. 19th century aesthetics attempted to reconcile these two approaches such as in the work of Oscar Wilde. Whitman saw the body as sacred and an embodiment of the divine and hence is seen by many as holding to a Platonic worldview. Plato also expressed a elitist view of homosexuality seeing it as the highest form of love and this is echoed in Whitman.

Juan A.Herrero Brasas offers a comprehensive comparison of Whitman and Fredrich Nietzsche, both who has similar approaches though Whitman held to democracy and Nietzsche despised it as the mediocrity of the masses. Both Nietzsche and Whitman extolled the virtues of the superman, were strongly influenced by social Darwinism and had strong views on race and culture. Whitman also varied from Nietzsche in that he did not celebrate war but believed that virtue grew out if the experience as grass grows out of rotting vegetables.

The Love of comrades is the foundation of Whitman's poetry and his vision for a new spirituality. There is no evidence for Whitman having heterosexual relationships though some scholars still try and suggest same, it is abundantly clear his comradeship was a refined form of same sex companionship and love. While including same sex on a physical level its focus was mystical and spiritual. Interesting Whitman argues that comradeship will form a new spiritual form of democracy which will purify the old forms of materialism. He believed that financial interests were decaying democracy and that a new form must be forged based on a network of comrades.

John A Symonds related Whitman's model of comradeship to Greek homosexuality and heroic love. Like Plato Whitman saw this form of love as superior to heterosexual love and related it to the love of strength, poetry and the warrior. Inherent within this model is a new form of ethics based on a love of earth and the comrade.

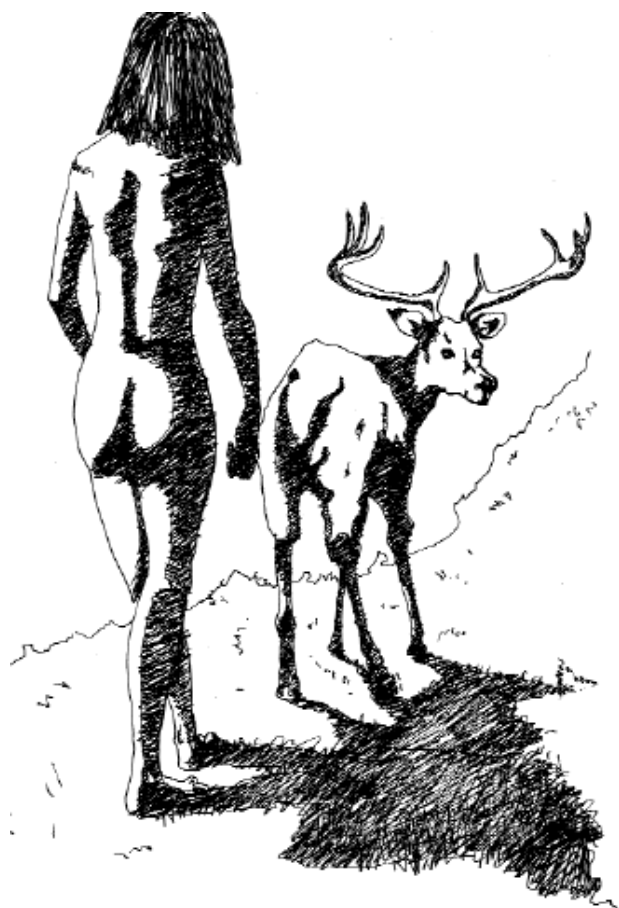
This is a significant work in that it explores both the spirituality and same-sex eroticism of Whitman as understood with the concept of the comrade. It has much in common with a radically traditionalist approach as found within both Plato, Indo European Mannerbunds and later the work of Hans Bluher. Whitman's emphasis on culture, heritage and race put him squarely within the traditionalist camp as does his approach to mysticism which while radical seems to come from a direct experience of the perennial wisdom. While this work offers much to consider the section on queer theory is less than illuminating and I look forward to a more extensive appraisal of Whitman in light of tradition. That being said this is a great place to start exploring the work of this truly remarkable man.

Fang and Fur
A Primal Guide to Animal Magic
Megalithia Books
Immanion Press 2006

Fang and Fur is an excellent guide to Animal Magic, it is well written, has a down to earth tone and something so often missing from books on magic, a great sense of humour. Lupa is honest, straight forward and sometimes sarcastic and hence brings a practicality to a subject often obscured by mystification.

Fang and Fur is not a spell book nor an encyclopaedia of animal allies, it is a practical guide. It avoids unnecessary moralism and demands the practitioner make their own ethical decisions, especially in contentious areas such as the use of animal parts or animal sacrifice.

Lupa avoids the psychological debates and simply suggests that totems are probably both psychological archetypes and spirit allies. While they can be created as artificial forms by magical rites, it does seem clear many totems are objectively real in some way or another. Many legends suggest that in early stages of develop-



ment man could move into animal forms as his form was more fluid. Today whether physical shapeshifting is possible is a major debate among practitioners.

Totems are sometimes divided into Tonal and Nagual animals, where the Tonal is defined by birthdate and the individual (or clan) form is the animal spirit ally. There are many methods to your totem including meditation and divination.

Having found your totem you need to learn about it and bond with it. Some suggestions are building a shrine using skins etc to add to the experience. Other methods include ritual, drumming, dance and pathworkings.

Familiars are another fascinating aspect of animal magic. In the witch trials it was believed a witch had a special teat to feed their familiar. If you want to make your pet into a familiar good animal care and affection is a must. Do rituals with your pet and create a nice bond. To attract spiritual familiars make your home physically and psychically nature friendly, opening up yourself to the spiritual animal allies that may be around. Of course evocations and rituals can also assist.

The use of animals in magic is an ancient art. There are many forms of animal evocation and invocation and you should develop your own animal quarter forms. You can also explore animal form assumption relating your animal to the gods such as cats to Bast and the Jackal to Anubis. A good way to learn about these forms is to study myth and legend; there are so many stories from Aesops fables to Greek myth.

However you should seriously consider the relationship between the gods and an animal before evocation, the Norse god Tyr, for example, should not be evoked at the same time as the Fenris wolf.

For the more adventurous you can use mythic or fantasy animals and even create your own





hybrid animals forms using the traditional Chaos Magick method for the creation of servitors. However design your animal carefully, focus your intent and limit its power.

Shapeshifting is of course the most challenging aspect of animal magic. Therianthropy involves a full change into an animal while non therian transformation is partial and achieved by ritual. This section includes a very comprehensive history of shapeshifting with superb historical references; there are lots of discussions of the various ways it can occur from the deliberate to accidental, invocation, curse or spell.

Most practitioners do not believe in the possibility of physical shifts but the subject is open to debate. Lupa makes a clear distinction between shapeshifters and furies and those involved in animal role play.

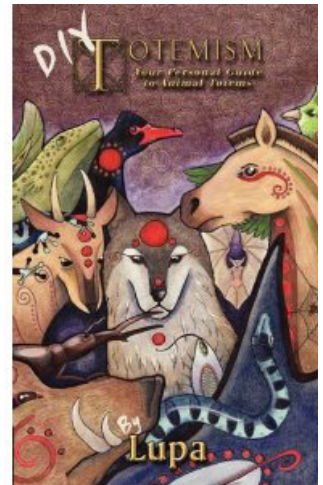
The final sections are certain controversial but make it abundantly clear it is up to the practitioner to make their own ethical choices. There is a comprehensive guide to working with ani-

mal parts, their use in ritual and animal sacrifice.

This is an excellent guide to all aspects of animal magic; it is written in a practical manner and demands a level of maturity and intelligence from its readers. It is quite comprehensive and includes a wealth of background information as well as thought provoking research.

**DIY Totemism:
Your Personal
Guide to
Animal
Totems
Lupa
Megalithica Books
Immanion Press**

DIY Totemism continues from where Lupa's earlier volume *Fang and Fur* left off, offering new exercises, practical advice and lots of background information.



DIY Totemism is aimed at bridging two forms of spiritual practise, paganism and modern magic (k). It is well written with a great sense of honesty and pragmatism and includes journaling exercises at the end of each chapter to reinforce what the reader has learnt.

The aim is for the practitioner to create their own system of totem magic and includes exercises you can adapt and a totem dictionary you can make for yourself.

Lupa takes a practical approach and makes it clear this a syncretic form of neopaganism, not an indigenous tradition and doesn't make any claim to native authenticity. She is honest to a fault and demands a practitioner think for him or herself. This is certainly not magic 101 magic and offers lots of possible interpretations of the concept of the totem ranging from psychological to spirit allies etc.

Lupa has a goof rant about too many animal dictionaries and argues about authenticity and the nature of animal magic as a pragmatic form. She demands we be creative about our totems

and accept not all totems have to be extravagant. Don't reduce you totem to a simplistic definition, a trickster is never just a trickster.

For good information Lupa suggests we go to academic sources, myth, legend and natural history. She argues against Castenanda and his fake shamanism, new age shamanism and finds Harner's Core Shamanism questionable since it tries to remove all cultural context.

There is nothing wrong with UPG Unsubstantiated Personal Gnosis but just be honest and don't claim indigenous links.

Lupa offers a fascinating chapter on unusual totems from extinct animals to mythological beasts as well as spirit journeying with dinosaurs!

Next Lupa considers animal divination decks and outlines the specifications for her own deck based on 33 cards. While not aimed at simple divination it is a complex and refined system for finding your totem.

Once you have found your totem you should undertake everyday work such as meditation and communication. It is a good idea to create a cycle of work including a range of regular practices.

There is a well-informed chapter on entheogens and animal work. It sensibly advises you to take full responsibility and thoroughly do your research before you ingest anything. Explore any affinities your animal may have to a certain plant or substance. *Animals and Psychedelics* by Georgio Samorini documents in academic splendour the drugs many animals seem to ingest and concludes their use has a specifically evolutionary value.

Lupa takes her early research on shape shifting further than in *Fang and Fur* and looks at invocations and magic and offers good clear instructions and guidelines. Lupa further examines therianthropy and totem work with excellent advice and suggestions. She avoids simplistic rites and offers guides such as how to create a guided journey, how to shift and conflicts between our human and animal mind.

On the theoretical side Lupa considers archetypal totems and their relation to the Master Ani-

mal of Joseph Campbell and considers whether totems are a two way street and help animals as well as us. She offers the suggestion that when an animal goes extinct power is lost on both sides and working with extinct animals can offer some redress.

Her approach through this book is to be creative, make your own totem system and forge your own tradition. The book ends with a discussion of the future of neopagan totemism which emphasizes once again the need to communicate, experiment, and create.

There are a good range of appendixes including rites, meditations and further essays.

**A Field Guide to
Otherkin
Lupa
Megalithica Books
Immanion
Publishing**

Otherkin are those who believe they are in some way spiritually or even physically non-human. Otherkin include Therianthropes and those who consider themselves elves, fey, vampires and many others. It is very difficult to define Otherkin but Lupa works not only to do so but to explore the way in which Otherkin perceive the world. This is not role playing and has nothing to do with Furries but is a distinct sense of being something else or "a kin to the other".

As Lupa notes Otherkin believe that denying this side of themselves is repression and can be unhealthy and destructive, even though it can be difficult to accept what does not fit into the human paradigm..

Awakening is the term generally used by Otherkin for realizing they are not 100% human. Usually it is not a blinding revelation but a slow unveiling of the reason behind that strange feeling of difference. It can be a hard path through belief, doubt even despair and then coming to a stronger form of belief and understanding. One has to realize that coming to the understanding





that you are an elf, dragon or wolf can be a startling if not frightening experience, not considering friends and families reaction.

Many Otherkin may not seem that obvious on their difference, but their perceptions of the world certainly are. Many experience strange reactions from animals including polarized responses of love or hate and find the same with humans. There is a lot of overlap between gender, sexual variance and Otherkin.

Lupa offers a good overview of historical and mythological background to Otherkin leading to a history of the modern movement including an outline of symbols which tend to be used by Otherkin.

There is a superb guide to theories of Otherkin origins with reincarnation being the most popular theory while others have psychological even physical explanations. It is possible there a neurobiological link connected to unusual brain activity such as Aspergers syndrome.

Further to this Lupa explores personal mythology, metaphor and imagination and the role of spirituality in Otherkin. She also considers Jungian archetypes and psychologically based approaches to Otherkin.

While there can be no definitive outline of the

types of Otherkin, some of them discussed and covered in this volume include...

Therianthropes of various forms with an excellent history, description of common animals and the many types of shifting.

Vampires including blood and energy vampires, debates on the ethics of blood use and feeding.

Elves and Fey including a discussion of the wide range of mythologies and origins myths.

Dragons, gryphons and mythological creatures including Unicorns, Phoenix and Kitsune or fox spirits.

Lupa follows this with an exploration of religion and Otherkin including various organisations such as the Temple of the Vampire and the Therian Temple. This is followed by a look at Otherkin and magick examining paganism, shamanism and ceremonial magic. There is also a very intriguing discussing of Glamour bombing as a form of magic and Otherkin invocation and evocation.

The book concludes looking at how to come out as Otherkin, researching your animal, networking and keeping a sense of humour.



**Geosophia:
The Argo of Magic
Volumes 1 and 2
Jake Stratton-Kent
Scarlet Imprint
Bibliothèque Rouge
(2011)**

Geosophia: The Argo of Magic was originally published in 54 vellum bound quarter editions and 500 clothbound editions. It is now in a high quality softcover form. Even in the softcover edition this set is superbly presented, beautifully typeset and a joy to behold. So often modern magic traces its origins to the Kabbalah and while this is certainly significant it is marvellous to see an exploration of early Greek and Roman magic and a clear exposition of how the grimoires of the medieval period originated from such traditions.

The subject is covered extensively with great erudition coupled with solid practical magical knowledge.

This combination of intellectual prowess combined with a great knowledge of grimoire and modern magic is unusual and truly impressive.



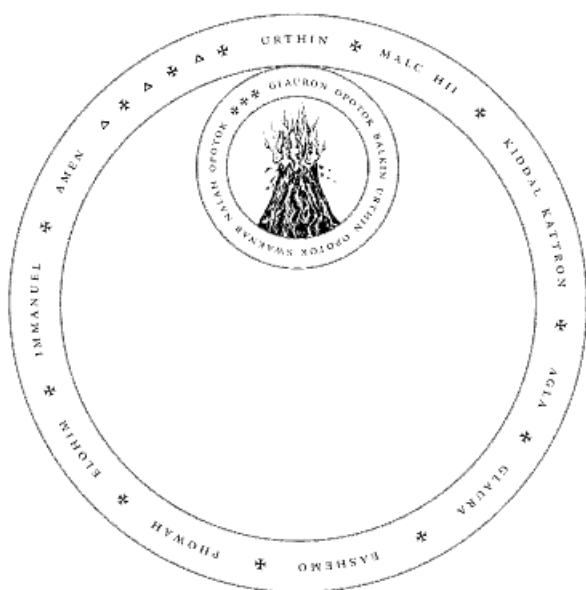
The work opens with an eye opening look at what Goetia is not. It is clearly not isolated to medieval texts but comes from the Greek term *goia* which is related to the lamenting howl made at Greek funerals, it hence reminds us of the use of the magical voice to evoke the dead in classical Greek magic. It is important to realize that such early forms did not have the same Judeo-Christian assumptions which later entered medieval and even modern magic.

There has been an overemphasis on Judeo-Christian forms in the grimoires and Stratton-Kent, wisely I think, decides to rediscover their Greco roman origin. Even though the Kabbalah is seen as the foundation of magic it did not enter into the magical tradition until 1490s while the Hellenistic tradition existed way before.

The Goetia was specifically related to demonic, chthonic and foreign forms. Foreign forms were not seen as negative simply for being foreign but simply alien to the prevailing deities of the celestial realms. There is a significant difference between revealed religion and natural religion which comes from the ground up and from the organic mysticism of folk. Natural religion tends to be chthonic and earth based and the revealed religion is celestial.

While the Goetia is primarily chthonic there was an obvious syncretism in later Greek traditions. The original forms of Goetia are focused on working on the dead. The mythic context of the Goetia is significant far more than tables of spiritual correspondences which does seem to be the flavour of so much of modern ritual magick. Stratton-Kent then offers an extensive timeline of Goetia. He offers a fascinating look at medieval and renaissance Goetia through a critical





Conjunction of Lavidan

examination of sections of the life of Benvenuto Cellini in various translations. Stratton Kent analyses these accounts using his not inconsiderable knowledge of grimoires and texts. Again we see how the classical and pagan were just as significant as Christian elements, an approach which has become lost in the post Kabbalah ritual magic tradition.

The legend of the Argonauts may seem a strange mythic device and yet it connects so many of the themes related to chthonic religion and the mystery cults that it forms a useful backbone to this book. This innovative approach also allows the investigation of classical, Hermetic and esoteric themes along the way. The *Argonautica* by Apollonius of Rhodes is the key text as it has a strong chthonic and Orphic emphasis favouring the mystery cults over the state religion. Stratton- Kent examines the tale in some detail decoding its deeper significance. There are various figures which have meaning in terms of both Greek shamanism and the *Argonautica*. Stratton- Kent examines them in extensive detail offering insightful information which is both academically and esoterically credible included is an excellent account of Orpheus and the mystery cults.

Stratton- Kent does not just delve into the dim reaches of the past, he discusses this many works in terms of modern magical practise. He



examines the role of magical holy books, practical and philosophic magic as complimentary techniques, a guide to the magic circle as the ritual space and the role of mythic geography. Each of these links to the ancient world of the Greeks through the medieval grimoires and has an application in modern magic. This study continues with a comparison of a diverse range of practical magic texts to offer a far more insightful vision of the magical tradition than I have seen in any other book on the subject. Throughout the work we also come to see how the ancient interfaces with the modern including with voodoo and African traditional religions.

The geography of hades includes an outline of the Greek underworld and the various stages of the afterlife journey. The *Goetia* can be traced from Greek necromantic practices through to medieval *Goetia* and beyond, this continuity is of vital significance and if studied will enliven the practise of the modern magician. Stratton- Kent expands this examination to look at the shamanic motifs in Greek myths and legends as cross referenced with grimoires and magical practise. He offers an intriguing comparison of the early concept of invoking the genius and the later role of the Holy Guardian Angel, a concept



so central to modern Thelema.

By using the *Argonautica* as the backbone for his work Stratton-Kent is able to explore a myriad of subjects, mythological, esoteric and mythological and bring them together into a truly awe inspiring vision of the Greco roman origins of magic.

It would be impossible to summarize the many threads he brings together except to say you will have gained an exhaustive education by the time you have concluded reading these volumes.

The founders of the mysteries offers an informed examination of the relationship between the goer, practitioners of Goetia and magic and the very foundation of the mysteries especially in reference to the Dactyls, who are discussed in the earliest references to the goer. Stratton-Kent offers a comprehensive look at the chthonic origins of the mysteries including a fascinating look at survivals of certain elements in Balkan folk traditions.

There is an extensive study of archaic star lore, tracing back Neo-platonic and cabalistic forms to the Ionian Greeks and Chaldeans.

Stratton-Kent's research on Apollo is revealing as he scraps back the later accretions to locate his original nature as a chthonic deity connected to pestilence. He follows with a superb exposi-

tion on the nature of Dionysius, two deities of such later significance in the philosophy of Fredrich Nietzsche.

There are lots of practical explorations as well including herbs, oils and magnets.

I especially found the exploration of the barbarian influence on Greek religion including Thracian and Scythian traditions fascinating. Stratton-Kent offers one of the first comprehensive examinations on the influence of Thrace on the history of magic, including an exposition of key Thracian deities.

This is followed by a revealing exploration of the concept of sympathy and its role in magic as traced back to Greek thought. Stratton-Kent continues examining the role of female practitioners of Goetia and correlates them with the role of the Scarlet women in Thelema. He continues the correlation with modern magic by examining Orphic resonances in modern magical forms and rites.

The *Argonautica* journey continues with lots of insightful observations and intense if not encyclopaedic research. The correlations between various systems including the Orisha, Egyptian and Sabeian offers a deeper vision of how we understand the origins of magic and the various practical discussions encourages us to enrich our practise.

Mastering the Art of Ritual Magick

Book 1: Foundation

Frater Barrabbas

Immanion Press

Web: <http://www.immanion-press.com>

Mastering the Art of Ritual Magick is an innovative, erudite and informed guide to modern magick. It is well presented and nicely illustrated. It can be easily digested as it is logically outlined in bit sized segments which are numbered for later reference.

Frater Barrabbas is critical of modern magick since while we have access to an incredible range of operational systems magick seems to have become frozen in time and lacks creativity and innovation.

What is unique in this work is that Barrabbas is not just offering another magickal system, he sees the magickian as an artist and is offering a unique set of tools for him or her to use to create their own personal magickal path. This is quite an unusual approach, most books of magick tend to offer "closed systems" and be strict in how things must be done. Barrabbas wants to encourage innovation and creativity so that not only does the student learn the system along the way but through the act of forging their own magickal path the student is transformed.

Of course this is quite an understanding so Barrabbas leads the student through the various techniques and forms of magick, evaluating them, discussing adaptations and looking at how they can be used in the students own personal system.

This volume covers the four elements, concepts of power, the magickal identity, mind control, sacred space, ritual structures, ritual performance, initiation and the mysteries.

The foundation of western magick is found on the tetrad which on a basic level relates to the four elements. It embodies creation, preservation, regeneration and dissolution. Barrabbas looks at various tetrad formulas such as YHVH and how they are used in modern magick and offers an extensive section on the magickal tools.

Magickal power is an elusive concept; it can be

seen as a mental or emotional form or even as a sentient energy. Barrabbas discusses various techniques to trigger ecstasy within a ritual context such as the cone of power and spiral vortex as well as the classic use of names of power.

Too often the magickian is convinced that wearing a robe and walking into a circle creates a magickal personality. Barrabbas discusses the true nature of the magickal persona and the use of a magickal name and motto.

While magick seems exotic and existing, it cannot be worked without learning to control the mind. Barrabbas examines asana, prana (use of the breath), mantras and trance techniques.

In Sacred Space Barrabbas considers how to map the spiritual worlds we are working with. He gives a modern adaptation of the Kabbalah which he applies both macrocosmically to other worlds and dimensions and microcosmically to mental and emotional states.

Once we have reached this stage we need to consider the nature of ritual structures. Barrabbas focuses on the significance of learning visualization and looks at how ritual works and how to design a ritual which will succeed. He also examines symbols, mudras and gestures and extended this into the key elements of ritual performance.

The chapter on Initiation in his book is especially perceptive. Barrabbas offers a masterful correlation of Joseph Campbell's twenty two stages of the heroic quest to the twenty two major arcana of the tarot. This offers some truly deep and significant insights into the nature of initiation.

The final chapter examines some of the key Mystery Traditions found in paganism. These include solar and lunar mysteries, matter and spirit and various others. This is a very lucid and clear outline of these profound teachings



which are at the centre of many pagan, heathen and esoteric traditions.

Mastering the Art of Ritual Magick is a non dogmatic guide to creating your own personal system of magick and is a system with no limitations only potential.

Tantric Thelema

Sam Webster

Concrescent Press

Web: <http://www.concrescent.net>

There has always been an interaction between sexuality and magick from the earliest days of pagan sex rites to the work of Aleister Crowley, the O.T.O and the tantric explorations of Kenneth Grant. Much has changed over the years with a vast number of published tantric texts which often now offer explicit outlines of what were hitherto hidden teachings. This is especially so with Tibetan Buddhism.

This is a truly innovative if not revolutionary work of magickal practise. Sam Webster has brought together an intricate knowledge of Tibetan Buddhist tantra, specifically the Mahayoga tradition, with the thelemic traditions focused on Ra Hoor Khuit. The cover of the book alone invites the reader to reconsider his approach as it shows Ra Hoor Khuit in the Tibetan Buddhist Thangka style.

Webster begins by treating Liber AL (The Book of the Law) as a working tantra and offers a range of practices based on this premise.

Entering the Buddhadharma introduces Buddhism, tantra and Thelema and relates them together in an unusual but ultimately coherent manner. The Nyingma school of Tibetan Buddhism, the oldest, believes that there are hidden texts known as Termas which embody the Dharma for various periods, so there is no reason Liber AL cannot be seen in this context. Too often Thelema is seen in isolation instead of part of a magical stream which includes both eastern and western practice.

In this work of Tantra Webster presents Ra Hoor Khuit as a wrathful deity and reinterprets Thelemite cosmology in Buddhist terms.

Shunyata is the foundation of this vision and found in Buddhism and Thelema, it is the emptiness which underlies all things. Nuit is Prajna-

paramita while Hadit is the Buddhanature in all of us. Together they produce Ra Hoor Khuit who is the yidam. Dharma, the law, is the great work and identical to the Thelemite concept of the law.

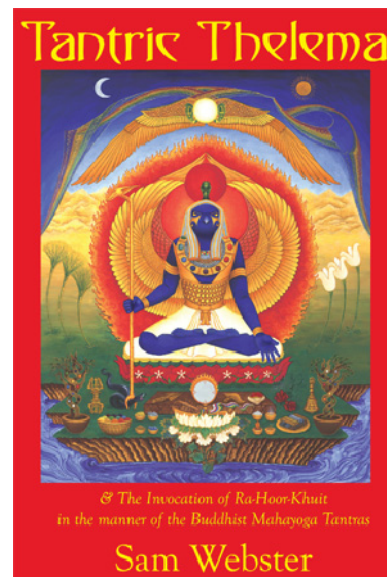
Webster discusses the Buddhist concept of dedicating merit and high intention and how western magick seems to have lost sight of the importance of intent.

He continues with a well-informed comparison of paganism with the various form of Buddhism and especially notes it's affinities with Vajrayana, Dzogchen and other tantric schools. He continues into the practical techniques of taking refuge and dedicating merit.

Since most pagans have trouble with gurus and in many ways the forms used are somewhat culturally inapplicable Webster develops a system with Hadit as the teacher within with a related practice. He continues with a thelemic adaptation of the two accumulations including the four Immeasurables and Self Liberation.

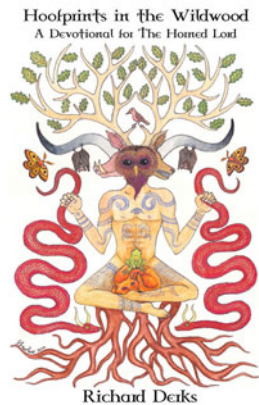
He continues to explore in extensive detail the theory and practise of deity yoga combining Vajrayana with the western tradition of Godform assumption. He then outlines the full tantra of Ra Hoor Khuit including preparation practises, generation in front and post transformation practises. When these are mastered you can continue to advanced workings such as Arising As, Fulfilment and Initiation.

At the end of the book he includes some "beta" techniques he has been exploring including Thelema based versions of the Yab Yum, Ganachakra and the Phowa practise.



Hoofprints in the Wildwood
A Devotional for the Horned Lord
Richard Derks
Gullinbursti Press
(2011)

I have always been attracted to the wildness of the many forms of the Horned God, Pan, Hernes and Cernunnos amongst others. While many books have reduced this great lord to the offside of the Goddess or worse, some sort of emasculated and sanitized form, this work celebrates the beauty, the wildness and the passion of the Horned One in all his glory. *Hoofprints in the Wildwood* offers a superb selection of beautiful artwork, texts, songs, poetry, stories and personal accounts. It is a moving collection, just a selection of the contents include...



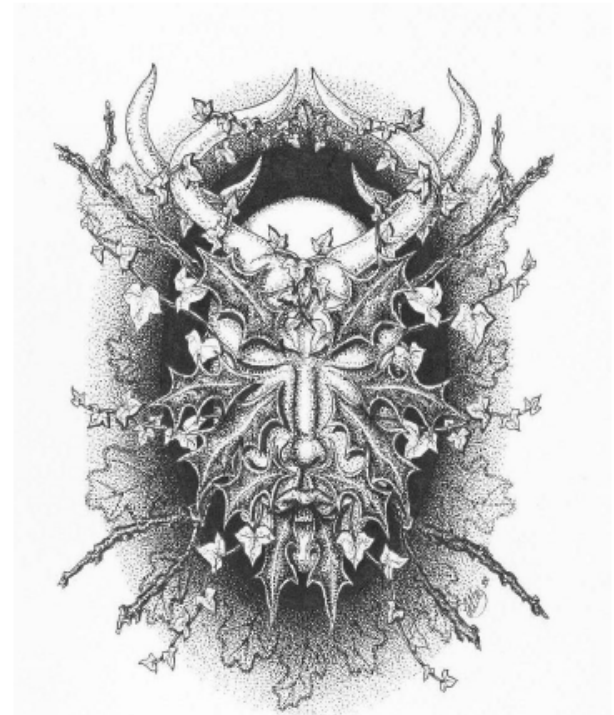
The Charge of the Hunter is a visceral call which evokes the feel of the lord of the hunt, while *My god - Juniper* offers a firsthand tale of experiencing the horned god not as some distant archetype but as a living entity.

Cernunnos et les Dioscures discusses a strange horned god plague believed to date from the first century BCE and there is an especially interesting Herne Rosary accompanied with a photo of the beads made by the author. It would be the basis of an excellent daily devotional.

There are so many great poems, prayers and inspired works; I found *Prayer to the Sacrificed King* by Eric Jeffords especially moving.

Herne at Mahon are reflections by two participants in a special closed rite run by The Order of the Dark Moon Rising centered on the great hunt. This rite includes possession or being ridden by Herne and hence is rather different from traditional magical practise. This is a wild ritual hunt with Herne, his hounds and prey and the reflections are personal and insightful.

The Vanic Creation tells a very different origin story based on the power of Herne, while *The Great God Herne* by Skadi Meic Beorh offers some reflective thoughts on the darker facets of



the path of the horned one. Bucca offers an extensive study of the horned god on Cornish tradition, who has both light and dark forms while *Shout at the devil* is a fun and insightful look at the horned god in his many forms as expressed in rock and heavy metal.

The Horned God of the East expands our horizons beyond the west and examines Pashupati lord of the beasts in Vedic and pre Vedic texts and traditions, relating such old ways to the early Shaivites and the Tocharians. The connections between the horned god, Shiva and Rudra and the later forms found in the West are significant and meaningful.

There are various personal accounts exploring how individuals experience with the various forms of the horned god. *Sex and Death* by Richard Derks is a prime example of a personal gnosis based on an individual experience of Cernunnos, as the god of sex and death. In *Meditations on the Horned Spirits of Sorcery and Death* Eric Jeffords brings together a diverse selection of myths and legends to create a visceral image of the horned lord as the witch father.

This is a superb selection of materials; diverse, informative, inspirational and often moving. It is a true evocation of the myriad forms of the horned god in all his beauty, wildness and passion.

On pain
Ernst Junger
Telos Press
Publishing 2008

Boredom is the dissolution of pain in time.

Tell me your relation to pain and I will tell you who you are

Ernst Junger

Pain really is a taboo subject. In the modern age we seem to spend an incessant amount of time trying to avoid it or at least embrace its opposite, pleasure. Medicines, psychology and anti-depressants are the currency of the day as we avoid any chance to face our pain and develop inner discipline. Junger discussed these ideas in "*On Pain*" in 1934 and saw the inability to use pain for our own growth as a form of cultural and personal weakness, a cancer of the soul. Sadly it does seem each generation is weaker than the last and his criticisms continue to resonate.

Pain is never considered as a path to strength and the development of self-discipline, so we deaden our pain forgetting its possible psychological even spiritual value. "*On Pain*" can hence be read on a symbolic level, while on a historical level it is far more challenging.

Junger like Julius Evola argues for a concept of war where violence is a path to transcendence, where killing becomes the way to forge a higher identity ready for sacrifice. This concept is certainly challenging and confronting and one that can be seen in various forms of war from the bliss of the Berserker to the self-sacrifice of the

kamikaze as celebrated in the works of Yukio Mishima.

On Pain from Telos Press includes a number of excellent introductions which put this work in the context on the Conservative Revolution and examine Junger's heroic ideal in some detail. Included are both a Telos introduction and one by Daniel Durst which considers Junger's heroic realism in terms of the period, context and philosophical trends of the time.

Written in 1934 a year after Hitler's rise to power Junger rejects liberalism as effete and embraces pain and sacrifice as central to human experience. His rejection of all liberal values is probably the most controversial of his opinions.

So often Junger is judged by the associations of the period. However just because conservative thinkers of the time thought National Socialism showed promise does not make them Nazis. We also need to appreciate the interactions of left and right and understand that then as well as now (witness the European New Right) such divisions are arbitrary at best, politically motivated at worst.

On pain is a historically significant document as well as offering challenging concepts and ideas which will provoke some deep philosophical



reflection. The Telos introduction is erudite and informative examining many different aspects of the book from the philosophical to political, practical to military.

The translator's introduction by Daniel Durst gives us a summary of Junger's life and writings. Junger is still considered a highly significant yet controversial German author.

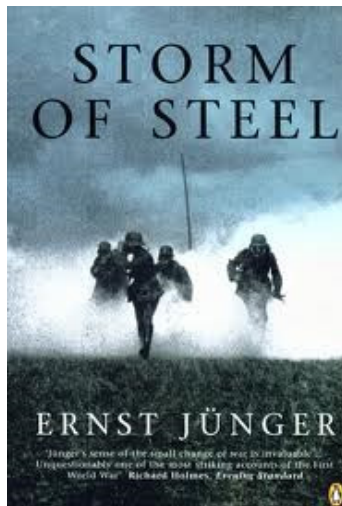
His novel *Storm of Steel* is still much celebrated while his Conservative Revolution values challenge the modern reader. He rejects individualism advocating the submission of the individual to the state. The value of man is in his ability to endure pain for a cause.

As bourgeois society removes pain and hence the will to power is lost, the result is that true aristocratic values such as honour and courage have been replaced with banal self-preservation.

True courage means fighting for a cause, even if this is akin to the Roman soldier found in Pompeii who stood by his post as he was engulfed by the volcano since he has not been relieved of his duty.

Junger's text is certainly provocative yet poetic in expression, it reminds me of Friedrich Nietzsche in its form of prose and it is clear he was influenced by Nietzsche's vision of the Overman. At the same time he takes Nietzsche's Overman and gives it a visceral presence in a practical guide to using pain to transform our humanity. This is not simply a philosophical work but a conceptual guide to how we can become more than human by liberating ourselves of our humanity through the use of pain.

On Pain opens with a reference to cooking a lobster and Japanese mother toughening up her child in case he needs to be a kamikaze pilot later in life. It is a work filled with historical references, deliberately shocking phraseology and forbidden thoughts.



Pain transcends all values and heroic tales which end in happy endings are contrived delusions.

Junger describes death, catastrophe and war with a sense of true delight since they provide an opportunity for courage and the development of Will. Reason cannot conquer pain only Will.

Mindless progress attempts to alleviate pain but in the end acculturates weakness. The heroic is where the body is seen as an object and is used according to the will. It is the desire to overcome pain personally or in battle.

The modern age of sensitivity gives the body primacy and hence lacks any true discipline or control. Pain transforms the physical look of the individual and the formations such as architecture they are expressed through, pain creates Nietzsche's New Man, the Worker who becomes one with the technology he uses.

Junger celebrates the machinery of war as an extension of the Worker and their role within the state. "*Technology is our uniform*" is how Junger describes it. As we move towards the development of the New Man, the Worker, we evolve a second consciousness where we see our bodies as an object, disciplined, ready for sacrifice as required. Junger also discusses photography as a weapon since it depicts reality as it truly is and is cold and cruel.

This is certainly a challenging work, of both historical and philosophical interest, which will stimulate the reader to consider the value of pain and the nature of sacrifice.

**Rediscovering Plato and the Mystical
Science of the Dialectic**
Norman Livergood
Dandelion Books

Web: <http://www.dandelion-books.com>

Rediscovering Plato and the Mystical Science of the Dialectic is a fascinating and informative read. It challenges us to re-assess the significance of Plato as a living philosopher and as a teacher who offers techniques which can help us overcome current economic political and religious tyrannies. Livergood presents the case that Plato is not some dry old pedant, but a representative of the perennial tradition which offers the path of philosophia to achieve real spiritual wisdom.

This Sophia Perennis has been transmitted age to age in unique cultural forms with Plato representing one of the more significant philosophic presentations. Plato makes it clear that critical thinking is learned and that reason and intelligence can be lost if not taught and used. This message is an ominous warning for our modern society.

A culture's values express its unique identity through its literature, poetry and music, the Greeks called this mimesis. It is the embodiment of the coherent ethos of a culture as expressed in its artistic forms. Plato's seeming condemnation of poetry was not literal, it has to be seen in the context of the movement from an oral to written stage of culture. Plato insisted on moving forward through these stages as he realized that the oral state, where the citizen lived through the memories of the culture was inimical to critical reason. He argued for a new form of cultural participation based on the philosophical method or critical thinking. The first martyr to the primitive mindset was Socrates as prejudice resulted in him being put to death.

We can see this happening today in reverse as our society becomes saturated with oral forms which are also expressed visually - TV, computer games and so on and reason and intelligence is lost. Plato understood the need to evolve from a primitive form of consciousness to a new rational state. Language is the key to reason and as education standards fail, language which provides the vocabulary of reason is lost and we sink into a morass of meaningless MTV culture.

**Rediscovering Plato and
the Mystical Science of Dialectic**



By

Norman D. Livergood



Dandelion Books, LLC
www.dandelion-books.com

The Perennial Wisdom

Plato needs to be appreciated as a perennialist teacher. He transmitting wisdom which comes from a higher state of cognition, he called this technique the dialectic. This approach is different from scholastic study and stands at the essential core of hermeticism, alchemy, Sufism, Neo-Platonism and so on.

Sadly since the time of Aristotle Plato was transformed from perennialist to philosopher and his teachings became distorted beyond recognition. The teachings of Plato are clearly a mystic transmission, a direct perception of wisdom not a dry logical system. This philosophia was a living system based on teaching a means for direct experience of the nature of ultimate reality. This teaching is transmitted by specific teachers in specific times sadly uninitiated students codify the teachings after their death and their potency and sometimes even their intent is lost.

The Dialectic system of Plato is a practice not just a theoretical system. Since Aristotle was not an initiate platonic the initiatory gnosis was passed via other ancient teachers.

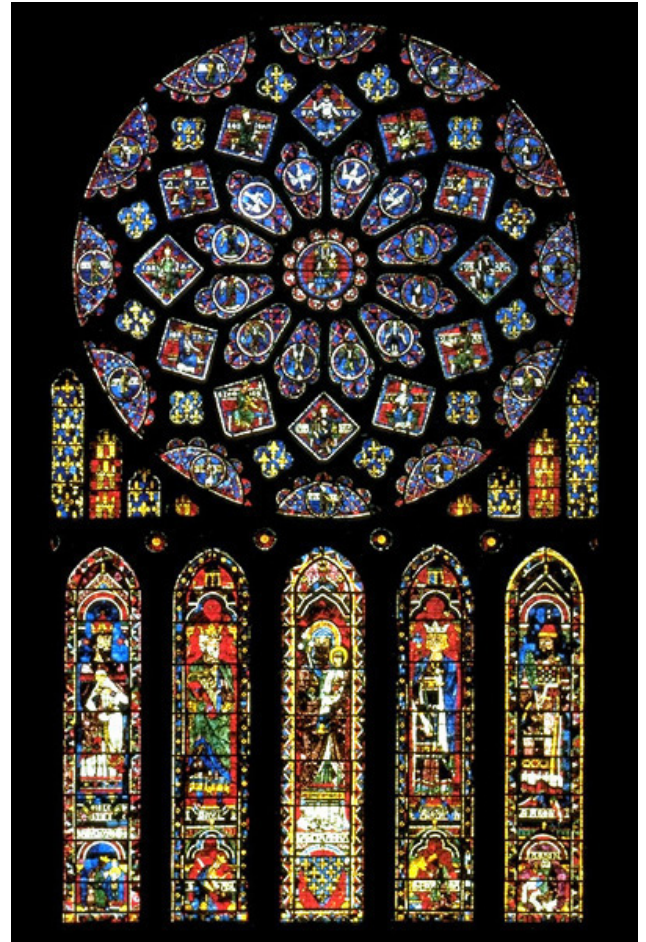


Since philosophy is a vein of living esoteric thought, Plato must be studied, meditated on, applied and the perennial wisdom experienced. To apply such wisdom we must know ourselves and free ourselves from delusion. This is a very different view from most modern interpreters of Plato and Livergood makes his case clear and eruditely.

Plato's forms are eternal and changeless with physical reality as their reflection. This is also found in other perennial traditions such as the Bhagavad Gita. Platonism and later explorations such as the Cambridge Platonists in England continued the lineage of personal evolution against the dry philosophic structures of Cartesian dualism.

Aristotle was used to bolster the power of the church with Platonic thought only found in Sufism and some schools of Jewish mysticism. Later strains of hermetic and platonic thought began to resurface in contradiction to both dogmatism and empiricism. The Cambridge Platonists stood against the puritans and empiricists arguing for direct spiritual experience and inner development.

The section on Platonism in art with a focus on the mystery school at Chartes in the 12th century is insightful. These gothic cathedrals were



places where Platonism and perennialism expressed esoteric principles via sacred geometry. This centred on the use of myth, poetry, visual forms and the senses to open a vision to the spiritual worlds. This concept was known as Ingenium and represented the use of the trained imagination or non rational means to access higher consciousness.

The science of the dialectic is based on dying before you die that is moving your awareness from the physical to the spiritual. The dialectic is a shared mystical experience triggered by the unique way Plato engages the reader. To truly experience the Platonic forms we must have a shared form of higher cognition, they cannot be understood by the normal rational mind.

Seed ideas are planted, watered and come to fruition. Plato does not condemn the written form only explains that the dialectic must be practiced and the higher state experienced and hence experiences cannot be reduced to writing.



The dialectic is not to indoctrinate but to draw out the essential awareness of the student with the philosopher and student working in tandem.

The process of the dialectic can be extended to explore aspects within ourselves via an inner dialogue and developed in a variety of media if the student is prepared and the teacher genuine.

What Plato dialogues teach us

Plato has created a unique form of practise which encourages the student to break out of the chains of everyday thinking and see things differently. Laches for example is a dialogue exploring the nature of courage.

Chapter 10 offers a consideration of the dialectic as a doorway to higher states of being with clear diagrams explaining the process. The dialectic is not just a praxis but a state of being which operates between the physical and ideal worlds.

An Inner dialectic is where the process involves using thought to achieve awareness. A good example is Boethius who had an inner dialogue with lady philosophy. This process can also be applied to study and learning. To study in a dialectic way requires the decoding of various levels of meaning to allow a deeper perception to unfold. Livergood offers an excellent guide as to how to understand the various levels within perennial literature.

Of course once we have mastered the dialectical way, we can explore the dialectic in terms of relationships, personal and political. On a political level we must face the dangers of capitalistic egoism and its consequences on the individual and the society at large. We must change the way we see relationships and this personal change will reverberate throughout the society. Whether it be the model of quantum physics or mysticism the individual is defined through their interrelation to others. The basis of any relationship must be in good communication and the next chapter explores dialectic communication.

Philosophy and the perennial wisdom can be used to expose tyrannies and systems which undermine independent thought. Livergood includes some quite strident criticisms of various modern philosophical systems. While I would not agree with all his assessments such as those of Heidegger and Nietzsche what he says is certainly thought provoking. Behind tyranny is ignorance and this is discussed in the next chapter, this leads further into the exploration of ignorance in the media or propaganda.

How Plato helps us wake up

Due to misinformation and indoctrination right from our earliest education we are put to sleep. This has drastic effects not only on the individual but in allowing financial interests to take control of our governments. Plato describes how our souls are immature and must be developed but sadly most people continue to be immature and hence incomplete beings. Immaturity includes the inability to tell fact from fiction and the acceptance of relativism. Plato demands we wake up and seriously consider the reality of the world of forms and experience a higher form of thinking. The only way to save mankind from the present age of despair is through the application of the perennial wisdom and the teaching of Plato's dialectical way of thinking. In a post catastrophic period the philosopher aristocracy would lead the commonwealth rather than our present system of economically manipulated plutocracy.

**Against Democracy and Equality:
The European New Right**
Tomislav Sunic
Arktos Media 2011
Web: <http://www.arktos.com>

This is a classic work and when first published introduced many of us to ideas and key thinkers within the New Right. For me it opened my eyes to a new way of looking at politics and culture and I have never looked back, it started a significant journey and I believe it can do the same for many who read it.

This is a superb new edition, nicely re-typeset with a series of new introductions. Editor John Morgan begins discussing the significance of this work when first published and the significance of the New Right which developed from the mess of WWII right wing theory. Sunic offers two introductions and discusses how since the Soviet bloc has fallen it is clear that the worldwide spreading of liberal democracy will bring about the next crash. Alain de Benoist offers some critiques of the terminology of the book (such as the title which he does not like and other technical issues) and offers some insight into the unique nature of the New Right which moves beyond the left-right dichotomy of modern politics. Daniel J. Stennett focuses in on the key issues with which the New Right take umbrage including materialism, equality and Judeo-Christianity. The introductions end with Paul Gottfried who looks at the dangers of uncontrolled big business and finance which stands against the traditions of heritage and culture.

These introductions may seem a bit like overkill but they offer insightful reflections on the New Right since this book was originally published in 1990. Alain De Benoist especially reflects on some of the significances and limitations of *Against Democracy and Equality* and how the New Right has developed some forty years after its birth. He explains how the New Right is founded on metapolitics rather than ideas, it offers a new worldview which encompasses everything from spirituality to ecology and this is what can really create change not old world party politics. Reductionism is the hallmark of all liberal democratic thinking since it attempts to reduce the complexity of life and culture to economics alone.

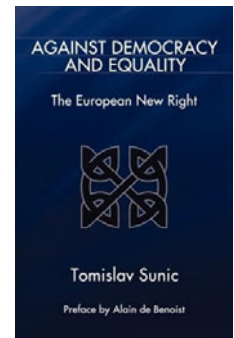
The New Right is a label created by the media

since the movement really is a third way beyond left and right, it is a network of political thinkers, philosophers and authors who think outside the political box. Many can be traced back to the Conservative Revolution and Sunic spends quite some time discussing these early significant authors many of which are neglected today. It is also made clear that the European New Right is very different from what passes as right wing thinking in the UK and US. Much of the US right wing is simply Christian based reactionary politics based squarely on the constitution with no real call to true change.

This work offers a superb introduction to the New Right, it is written in an incisive, clear and straight to the point manner. Its arguments are persuasive and it is amazing how much can be packed into a small volume. It is clear about the innate dangers of Communism and Democracy and traces these back to the Judeo-Christian ideal of equalitarianism. Sunic also gives us a background to the unique views of the European New Right and discusses the problem of language and media distortion which has continued unabated since this volume was written. WWII was been constantly used to discredit the right even though New Right thinkers have a clear disdain for totalitarian regimes of all sorts.

Defining the New Right is another difficult conundrum as this label stuck even though it was provided by the media and does not do justice to the total transformation of values the movement represents. It is clearly a cultural movement with political policies from left and right presented in a totally new configuration. Sunic charts the development of the movement, it's persecution by both conservatives and the left and deliberate media distortions such as attempts to portray it as fascism in a new skin.

One of the major discussions is how politics should operate and Sunic discusses how the New Right sees that culture and ideas influence society not economics. Socialism and liberalism are in control of the status quo through their manipulation of media and through sentimental propaganda not because they are philosophically correct nor because they ultimately work.



State power is not ultimate as Lenin suggested, because the power of the state is formulated by popular ideas, values and even myths. This is why the New Right has examined the monotheism of Judeo-Christianity and found it wanting since on a mythic and philosophical level it is destructive and has consequences on a society which need to be dealt with.

Sunic then offers an examination of a selection of authors whose ideas have influenced the New Right. Just because some Conservative Revolution thinkers had their works adopted by the National Socialists does not mean the whole movement can be written off thus. The whole debate on ideological consequences is fraught with danger, just how far do we go. Does anyone who has socialist ideas end up being held responsible for the gulags ? It is a philosophical indefensible argument used primarily for emotional effect to try and ignore the significance of a certain way of thinking or to discredit a given author with dealing with their work. The Conservative Revolution stood against untrammelled individuality, the rejection of cultural and collective ties and the obsession with progress and supposed modernity. Sunic chooses three authors who embody the political and social dimensions of this movement. Each is introduced in a brief, succinct but informative chapter. You will want to read more from each of these authors after experiencing these introductions !

Carl Schmitt is the first. For Schmitt modern politics has become a shallow mask for economic interests alone with the primary goal for the politician to be re-elected at all costs. The modern political apparatus communist or democratic tries to remove all barriers between individuals, states and communities to achieve more control. However this creates a new outlaw class, those who refuse to join the new form of political dominion. Schmitt's works are complex and intellectually challenging but certainly worth studying.

Oswald Spengler's **Decline of the West** is a masterful work which offers an organic view of history seeing each culture as a living forms going through life cycles like the seasons. Spengler sees Democracy as leading to totalitarian or "muscle regimes" as economics takes control and the soul of the culture is lost.

Vilfredo Pareto analysed political forms like Freud analysed personal neurosis. He looked at the innate self-deception in the political structure especially the gap between socialist rhetoric and reality. Ultimately he saw all political systems as ending in demythologization as the gap between the reality and their ideology becomes too great to sustain. Pareto considers the role of sentimentality in promoting a political system and in modern tones the myth of endless growth and progress as one of the great delusions.

One of the unique aspects of the New Right is its strident criticism of Judeo-Christian monotheism and its admiration for European paganism. This has caused quite a stir and continues to conflict with other conservative groups. This paganism is not a nostalgic desire for the past not a cultic new age type approach but a desire to forge a new worldview for the future. Monotheism brings with it simple dichotomies and limited values while polytheism opens a new vista of opportunities. The prime cause of the modern political systems comes from ideas which were formulated from monotheistic thought in the second section Sunic examines these ideas one by one. The metaphysics of equality traces this back to Judeo-Christian thought. Sunic explains how Liberal democracy suggests that all must have equal access to resources and this creates innate conflicts since within a capitalist system this is just not possible. Marxism attempted to resolve economic inequalities from the top down, while liberal democracy focuses on human rights and seems to ignore economic inequality altogether. Such systems are hence innately unstable and imbalanced and tend to end up as totalitarian as they try to enforce their models of reality. Sunic examines the whole issue of egalitarianism from various angles considering its innate impossibility in the face of biological inequality and the way in which it creates a constant battle to achieve a goal that cannot be reached.

This excellent and challenging volume concludes with an examination of Major Figures of the European New Right and the Manifesto for a European Renaissance by Alain De Benoist and Charles Champetier. It itself this is a significant document which has circulated on the internet and been published in booklet form at various times. It offers a powerful vision of what New Right politics can be.

Nazis, Fascists, Neither ?
Ideological Credentials of the British Far
Right 1987-1994
Troy Southgate
Wermod and Wermod Publishing Group
Web: [Http://wermodandwermod.com](http://wermodandwermod.com)

Nazis, Fascists, Neither ? by Troy Southgate is a highly significant work which analyses the British right from 1987 through to 1994. It works to get behind the smears of the popular press and politically correct academics and consider the real political positions of far right organisations. Too often such organisations are simply labelled as Nazi or Fascist without any consideration of their true positions or what they really have to say.

We may debate why the media and others allow such smears to cloud objective study of such organizations, my own opinion is that it is a way to avoid engaging with the many uncomfortable questions they bring to the table about the current political questions.

This is a well documented and insightful study, profusely referenced and intelligently presented. It challenges the reader to think outside the ideological box and not only examine the true positions of these organisations but consider some of their ideas objectively. Southgate avoids the heated polemic about exactly what Nazism and Fascism is and moves to primary sources using the documents produced by each to come to an understanding of their political positions.

This call to primary sources early in the book shows Southgate's excellent credentials as a historian avoiding the obscurity so often found in academic discussions on these subjects.

When it comes to National Socialism a definition is not quite as simple as the reader may first suspect. Nationalism Socialism can really be seen within three stages, the true left socialist form of National Socialism as rep-



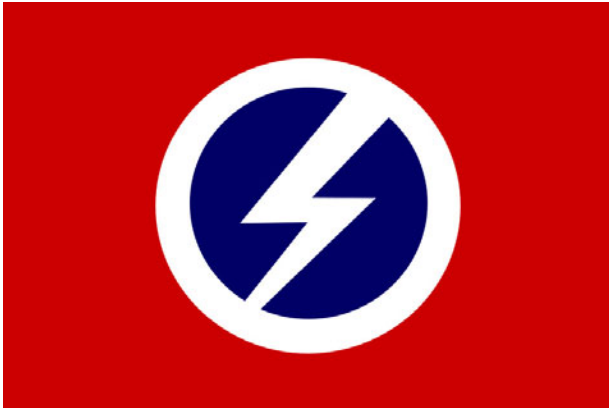
resented by Otto Strasser, the National Socialist policies outlined in twenty five points by Gottfried Feder and the National Socialism post 1921 when Hitler came to power. In many ways it would be more accurate to call Strasser's and Feder's forms Nationalism Socialism and the post Hitler ideology Hitlerism, but that is not how history has recorded it, everyone has come to be painted with the same brush after Hitler took over the NSDAP. While the earlier party policies emphasized improvements to industry and controls on capitalism and the banking system Hitler caved into big business and allowed capitalism and the banking system to expand unrestrained. Under Hitler the party the Fuhrer principle was put into place with total obedience demanded. The party tightened its racial policies and became rabidly anti-Jewish, rather than anti-Zionist.

Fascism while also focused on the leadership principle was never essentially anti-Semitic and race only played a minor role. However it had few true revolutionary characteristics as Mussolini expounded a truly a corporate and totalitarian vision of the state.

Southgate uses these nuanced and insightful interpretations of National Socialism and Fascism to decode the Far Right and the labels which have been placed on its various organisations.

Far Right in Britain 1919 - 1986

This section offers an intriguing history of all



Symbol of British Union of Fascists

manner of groups with a bewildering range of political agendas and of varying sizes and influence.

Mosley's British union of fascists was probably one of the larger groups with a strong Fascist orientation. Southgate also examines various thinkers who while significant to the right could not be considered Nazi or fascist while many are clearly anti-Semitic these include Hilaire Belloc, Douglas Reed and many others. Arthur Kenneth Chesterton is another example who stood against globalization and what he perceived as the Jewish influence in world affairs. Southgate looks at the interconnections between these organisations and how in the Sixties they came together as the National Front.

As the Front moved into the Seventies differences developed between Strasserites, Democratic Reformers, anti-constitutional revolutionaries and the more Nazi inclined. The true counter revolutionaries were somewhat sick of the reactionaries and mainstream conservatives and the party began to experience major difficulties.

After numerous splits the British National Party of the eighties developed a younger membership and worked to focus on a Third Way approach avoiding the old reactionary pitfalls. It emphasized moving beyond capitalism and communism and explored new territory in economics, agricultural reform and social issues. In 1986 the National Front internally exploded, due to a combination of ideological clashes and personality issues.

This is certainly an informed and intelligent history avoiding polemics but telling the facts as

they are. The complexity of the National Front and its various stages notwithstanding makes it clear that taking a reductionist view and calling it fascist or Nazi is simply not accurate.

National Front 1987 - 1990

During the period the Front becomes something

which is very different from that which has gone before. It develops a merit based organizational structure with no leadership principle and rejects white supremacy developing racial separation as a new policy. As part of this model they develop links with Louis Farrakan of The National of Islam and Muammar Gaddafi of Libya who propounds his Third Universal Theory. Indeed, the Third Universal Theory as found in Gaddafi's Green Book is not unlike the Third way thinking which was evolving in the National Front. The Front of this period was strongly anti-Zionist but not Anti-Jewish.

National Front Support Group 1987 - 1994

While Searchlight the anti-fascist magazine which seems to find Nazis on every street corner believed the split in the National Front was a ruse, it was clear that the National Front Support Group only had limited values in common with the National Front. While it espoused racial separatism it seemed obsessed with race and its outline of economic reforms were underdeveloped.

Third Way 1990-1994

The Third Way was formed by ex National Front members hoping to truly develop the Third Way position which was found as the National Front collapsed. While encouraging racial separatism they worked with organizations of various racial backgrounds. They were reformist economically and had a distributionist approach.



Troy Southgate

On a political level they favoured more direct representation of the populace and had a position beyond capitalism and Marxism while seemingly still working within the democratic camp.

The International Third Position slowly evolved from a Third Way organization into a traditionalist catholic organization which was in this case was quite fascist at its core.

The English Nationalist Movement left the International Third Position as it slouched towards fascism. It was ethnically pluralist but not multicultural and was truly revolutionary rather than trying to simply combine nationalism and capitalism. It recognized that it was impossible to change the system without a total revolution of some form or another.

British National Party 1987 -1994

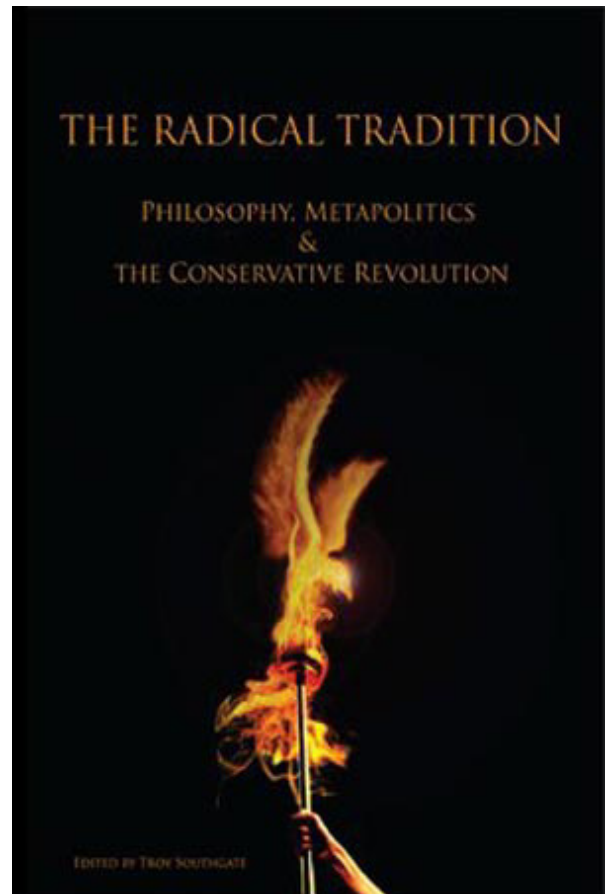
The British National Party has a very strong focus on the leadership principle and had a white supremacist message coupled with an obsession with eugenics. While claiming to be anti-Zionist, it regularly voiced anti-Jewish sentiments. It was capitalist and constitutionist in orientation and worked to win through the ballot box.

The appendix offers an excellent summary of where these organisations led and what happened to them.

This is a superb work, well researched and succeeds in not only clearing up media and academic distortions about the Far Right in Britain but introduces the reader to significant political ideas which are thought provoking. It elucidates the differences between anti-Zionist and anti-Jewish thinking, the various forms of National Socialism, the reactionary versus the revolutionary right and ethnic pluralism and racial separatism vs white supremacy.

It also discusses a range of figures such as Otto Strasser who loom large in true revolutionary far right thinking.

To learn more about Otto Strasser Troy Southgate has produced an excellent biography.



Troy Southgate has a new book coming out from Primordial Traditions who publish works bringing together esotericism, Traditions and politics.

This book includes articles on Heidegger, cultural pessimism, Schopenhauer, conservative revolution, Trotskyism and Western art, alternative businesses, Murnau's 'Nosferatu', national identity, Nietzsche and nihilism, Sufism, human rights and Christian anarchism.

Contributors include:

Tomislav Sunic, Jonathan Bowden, Troy Southgate, Wayne John Sturgeon, Alex Kurtagic, Brett Stevens, Maxim Borozenec, Dr.Kerry Bolton, Vince Ynzunza, Sean Jobst, Ben Craven, Tony Glaister, Keith Preston and Gwendolyn Toynton.

Primordial Traditions

Web: <http://www.primordialtraditions.com>

When you visit their site see their latest title on The Northern Tradition which has also been reviewed in this issue.

**Postmortem Report:
Cultural Examinations from Postmodernity**
Tomislav Sunic
The Palingenesis Project
(Wermod and Wermod Publishing Grop)
Web: <http://www.wermodandwermod>

Postmortem Report is an insightful and challenging look at the modern world; it is incisive, erudite and informed. It includes a wide range of essays most by Tomislav Sunic but some by other authors such as Alain De Benoist. The book is divided into various sections and offers some truly original analysis, I will reflect on just some of the essays and subjects covered.

Religion is the first section and in Marx, Moses and Pagans in the Secular City Sunic reflects on the origins and nature of Christianity as a political force. As Christianity became the state religion of Rome it persecuted, tortured and slaughtered its pagan opposition in a manner more extreme than the of the pagan persecutions that had preceded it. To sustain its grip Christianity adapted pagan and ethnic folklore to and distorted them to their own benefit.

In recent times there has been a revival of pagan philosophy from Heidegger to Alain de Benoist with a strident movement away from monotheism. Many now conjecture that the desert values of monotheism gave birth to the extremes of communism and capitalism which could never have developed in organic polytheistic cultures. One of the central problems in the modern political environment is the insanity of equalitarianism which only developed with the adoption of Christianity. Even though Christian values have consciously waned, unconsciously its values form the framework of capitalism, liberalism and Marxism. Which some may denounce paganism as nostalgic; nothing could be more backward looking than Christianity. The concepts of the sacred in the Indo European tradition is never based on fear but on honour and respect, on responsibility over vicarious salvation.

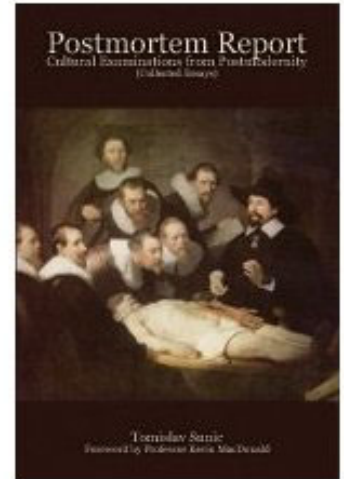
Monotheism vs Polytheism by Alain de Benoist with an introduction by Sunic is a marvellously erudite celebration of polytheism and a celebration of pagan philosophical thinking over the more tawdry images we see paraded in the media. Too often liberals and secular humanists

while deriding Judeo Christianity do not realize it is the origin of their assumptions about the world. Athens was the homeland of the Europeans way before Jerusalem; democracy is Greek in origin not Christian, though admittedly distorted by centuries of Christian thought. This is a fascinating work of exegesis showing the inherent violence and intolerance within monotheism this gave birth to totalitarianism in its various forms.

The next section is on Cultural pessimism and opens with an essay exploring the vision of Oswald Spengler. It is an excellent introduction to the morphology of history and it's cycles as well as Spengler's diagnosis of the death throes of a civilization which fit rather well with the modern age with its obsession with technology, money and the cult of the individual.

Benoist and Sunic then take aim at modern society offering a sociological view of what has gone wrong. They compares the movement from tribes to states and offer a comparison with the lack of stability in the modern state where goods and services and consumerism have replaced a sense of common culture and shared identity. Liberalism with its emphasis on the individual at all costs has destroyed the natural coherence of the traditional worldview and removed natural values found with united cultures which have a shared heritage, hence leaves the modern society without meaning.

Emile Cioran and the Culture of Death explores the significance of the tragic. The tragic can only be overcome by the heroic and this is documented from Heracles to Heidegger. It stands in direct contradiction to both the Christian concept of salvation and the modernist ideal of liberalism. Cioran was a French Romanian essayist with a sense of the tragic and a belief in the cyclic view of history. He wanted to restore Pre Socratic thought and denounced Christianity, rationalism and positivism. He argued we should use nihilism and pessimism against pessimism in a way that his work resonates



with both Vedic thought and the teachings of Fredrich Nietzsche.

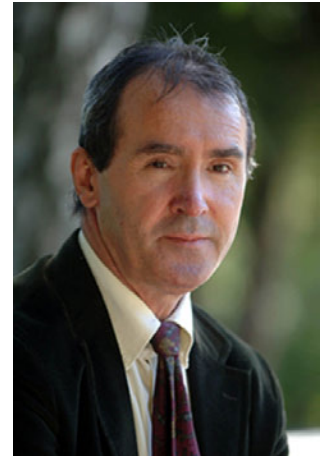
Race and the third Reich is a fascinating section with some very significant articles. The Beauty and the Beast: Race and Racism in Europe looks critically at the whole issue of race and eugenics without political correctness or bias. Race comes from the word radix or roots and became an ideologically loaded word in the twenties. While there is overwhelming evidence for biological racial differences today the debate is overlaid with political correctness. Prior to 1945 eugenics in Europe was the norm any responsible parent would enquire as to whether their child was marrying into a family with a history of alcoholism etc.

This essay offers a fascinating look at historical basis for health and beauty in the ancient world. Building on this basis Sunic then considers the modern problem of race which is based on the illusion of equality and multiculturalism. Liberal multiculturalism while talking about diversity actually levels the races and refuses to acknowledge their true diversity.

Liberalism and Democracy is the next section and again challenges our preconceptions. Alain de Benoist looks at democracy, ancient and modern. The term democracy actually means very little and has been claimed by nearly every regime including those of the extreme left. At the same time the model of progress with democracy at the pinnacle is simply not confirmed by any critical examination of history. Many early cultures in contradiction to how they are represented had significant degrees of popular participation and hence in many ways democratic. In most Indo European societies kings were elected indeed even the holy roman Emperor was an elected figure. It was around 12th century C.E. that hereditary rule began to take precedence before this period democratic forms are found throughout the ancient world.

The oldest parliament was that of Iceland the althing as early as 930 C.E. De Benoist then offers a comprehensive exposition of Greek Democracy. Athenian democracy was based on the individual as part of the collective and having a shared inheritance in the state in opposition to modern liberal democracy which is obsessed with the individual alone.

Equality in this model was not natural equality which is the modern obsession but equality in terms of participation of the state; it comes from citizenship and belonging not from the isolated individual. It is strange indeed that historians today judge the original form of democracy through the lens of its modern descendant which is really is quite a distortion.



Tomislav Sunic

Francois-Bernard Huyghe considers the relationship between liberalism and democracy and concludes via the work of Carl Schmidt that liberalism is actually the antithesis of participatory of democracy and that as liberalism increases it will have dire consequences in multicultural nations. Schmidt argues that liberalism within a democracy is a means to remove true politics and reduce a government to the role of a handmaiden to economic interests. True or organic democracy must be focused on a coherent shared heritage or Volk not on economic interests. Liberal democracy in upholding the isolated individual over the rooted individual as part of a Volk is hence in a state of contradiction which will lead to anarchy and its disintegration.

In Multiculturalism and Communism Sunic offers an interesting essay examining the scarce literature found in Eastern Europe which is critical of America. It is quite fascinating to note that Eastern Europe is primarily homogeneous; Western Europe has around 7% non-European while America comes it at 25%. Strangely due to its history of communist rule east Eastern Europe perceives America to be the honest broker even with clear evidence to the contrary, while slowly this is changing.

This is followed by a number of essays covering the many faces of nationalism and the cult of the individual versus the significance of peoples and heritage groups. This is a must have book for anyone who is seriously considering the fate of the modern world and the philosophical ideas which underlie its decay.

The Problem of Democracy
Alain de Benoist
Arktos Publishing 2011

The defenders of every kind of regime claim that it is a democracy

George Orwell

Alain de Benoist is someone who is of immense significance within the development of a new way of considering democracy. He is the founder of the European New Right (Nouvelle Droite) and has published a vast number of titles most of which are in French. English translations are primarily found online and in various compendiums (such as *The Postmortem Report* by Tomislav Sunic). The only published English title I could locate is *On Being a Pagan* published in small numbers by Ultra Press in 2004.

His political works are of prime significance and one of his most penetrative examinations of modern politics is found in *The Problem of Democracy* published in English for the first time by Arktos Publishing.

What always astounds me about Alain de Benoist is his combination of scholarly erudition and an ability to communicate concisely and clearly. In this slim volume he is able to not only dissect the fallacies of modern liberal democracy but offer a history of its original Athenian form and outline what a organic form of democracy should look like, no mean feat ! He doesn't waste a single word, there is no padding, fat or extraneous content. At the same time he realizes the controversial nature of his analysis and offers copious references.

The Problem of Democracy opens with an excellent preface by Tomislav Sunic who gets right to the heart of the matter. He discusses how the term democracy is used as a sort of mantra without any real meaning or content. While in Athenian Greece and Iceland democracy had real significance, today it is just a mask for big business interests.

De Benoist begins with an examination of the use the word democracy and how it has been used by most regimes including the soviets. It is a term so supposedly significant its very use seems to somehow sanctify a regime regardless of its real intent or questionable activities.

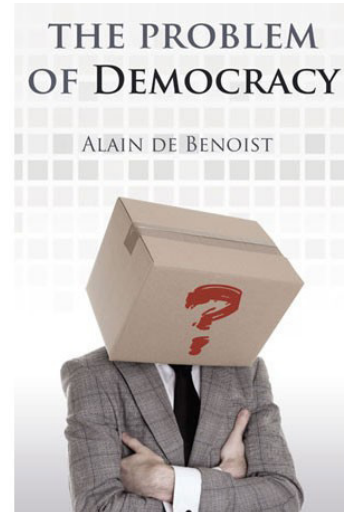
Underlying the use of the term democracy is the fallacious view that history is progressive and modern democracy is its apex. This view is not sustained by any critical examination of the facts of history since neither is the concept of modern democracy the

most successful, indeed many would consider it an abject failure and other earlier forms such as the Athenian existed way before the modern period. The ancient democracies were natural in that they developed from the common union of the people and from a organic sense of hierarchy de Benoist calls this "Aristo-Democracy".

Earlier forms of democracy while existing in earlier periods did not resurface until the 18th century and then in a very different form. French revolution style democracy was the people's expressed through a government that ruled in its stead. Representational yes, but hardly historical democracy. Ancient democracies were direct democracies while modern democracies are representational.

De Benoist offers an extensive and enlightening study of what Greek direct democracy really was like. Being a citizen came from belonging and this sense of community was the foundation of the democratic system. Liberty in the Greek sense meant being part of a community and the freedom to participate. The idea of an isolated individual freedom was totally alien to the Greeks, indeed we get the word idiot from *idiotes* or non-citizen. Aristotle expresses this as "man as a social being" and a "political animal" i.e. man must be understood as part of a community and not as an isolated individual. There is no natural equality since citizens will be very different from each other, equality extends only from participation as a citizen, and this is the direct opposite of modern democracy with its obsession with individual rights.

It is strange how today Athenian democracy is



judged by modern forms and not the other way round. Athenian democracy is historically the source and surely should be the standard by which other so-called democratic systems are judged. Modern democracy based on Christian values and the cult of the individual is a very different beast indeed, representational and ruled by financial elites.

In *A Defence of Democracy* de Benoist looks at the failure of the supposed universality of democracy and offers well documented critiques of liberal democracy from the left and the right. For democracy to operate it must appeal to the masses and hence becomes the rule of quantity and becomes the very lowest common denominator of a culture. Liberal democracy is usually defended by the fallacious argument that we only have two choices democracy or tyranny, this false dichotomy ignores others form of democracy that may exist for example organic democracy.

What many historians ignore is that the fact that the many various forms of tyranny, left and right, originated from the same source as democracy, that is in 18th century equalitarianism. Any scientist will tell you that the number of individuals believing a theory does not make it right; it must be tested and proven. How can we assume that a popular majority is in any sense able to make a qualitative decision? As M. Taine said "ten million ignorant men cannot constitute a wise one". In any objective study of academic achievement it is the minority who are the best, the average is the mediocre yet we choose the majority as a foundation for government.

The key concept here is competence and this has been argued since the days of Plato. At the same time without cultural context this too can degenerate, as it has in liberal democracy, when it has become the rule of the technical expert and the user of technology. This soulless structure is often based purely in economics and stands against the old traditions of heritage and folk. True democracy is based on a sense of belonging and shared heritage not on the narcissism of the isolated individual which especially finds its expression in the American lifestyle. True democracy can never be related to liberalism and equalitarianism which actually negate the collective shared experience on which real democracy is based.



The concept which underlies all forms of liberal democracy is total equality or equalitarianism and this is clearly a logical fallacy. It has been denounced since the days of Plato and Aristotle. Man is by his nature unequal with all manner of variations and to suggest a philosophic and political equality is a nonsense. There is a vast difference between the equality that gives to each equally and that which gives to each what they deserve. The model of numerical equality is based on the Christian monotheistic model where everyone is the same before God; culture is reduced to insignificance and quantity rules. This is in direct contradiction to the ancient pagans who believed "to each his merits".

Modern democracy is based on a myriad of contradictions. By voting for officials which then represent the voter the voter actually abrogates their liberty and hence the system actually becomes one of minority rule. In addition majority rule is a statistical impossibility in large states since every individual cannot have a true and direct influence. The concept of representation where power is transferred by the vote to a minority who rules in the people's stead is not much different from monarchy or other forms of minority rule.

As soon as direct democracy is invalidated minority rule can be used to justify any form of tyranny. At the same the unruly direct rule of the masses will not necessarily lead to enlightened government either. This is where concepts of community, folk and natural hierarchy enter the picture and why modern systems of democracy which embrace pluralism and multiculturalism are slowly decaying from the inside due to unresolved conflicts at their very core.

The Crisis of Democracy offers a penetrating look at the dismal failure of liberal democracy today. Both Marxism and liberal democracy claimed to be democratic and both actually grew from the same 18th century tree of numerical equality. Marxism claimed it was a form of social democracy yet became a form of hard totalitarianism. Formal or liberal democracy is simply the rule of the bourgeois and is also heading the way of totalitarianism, many would argue it is a form of soft totalitarianism already. Liberal democracies are controlled by the vast network of bureaucrats who work within them and the businesses that backed the party that won the election. The impetus behind liberal democracy is hence found in money and power alone.

The modern world needs an organic form of democracy, based on folk; a sense of belonging, small territories and direct expression of the democratic ideal and de Benoist discusses some of these options in the last chapter. He follows this by ten theses of democracy which should be debated, discussed and considered by anyone who questions our modern way of life and where mankind is heading.

Programming the Human Biocomputer

John Lilly, M.D.

Trans. Beverly Potter Ph.D

Ronin Publications 2004

Web: <http://www.roninpub.com/>

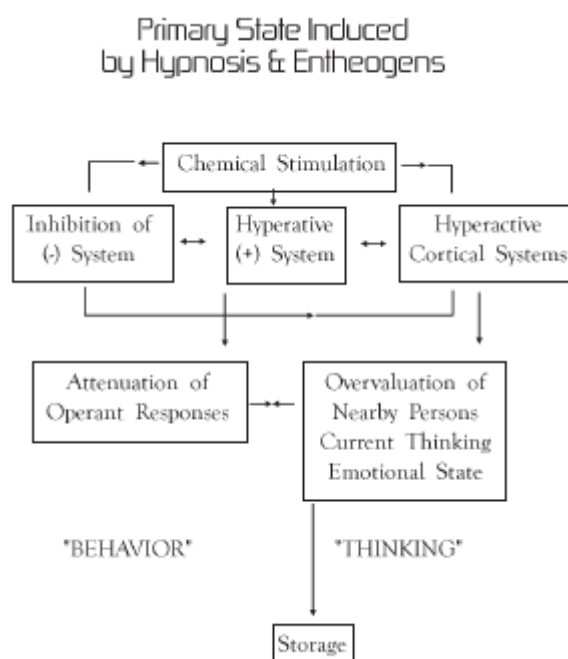
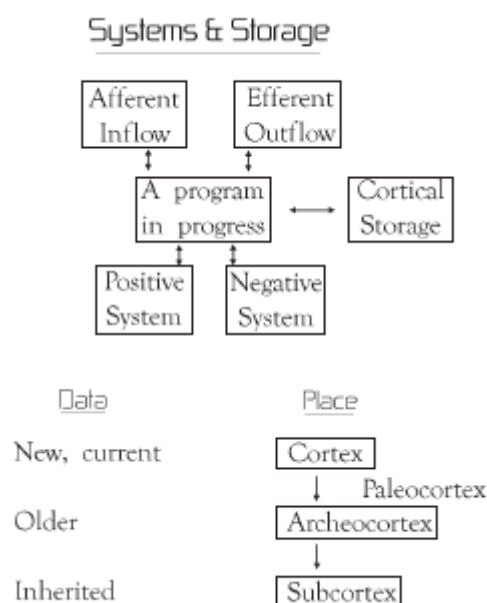
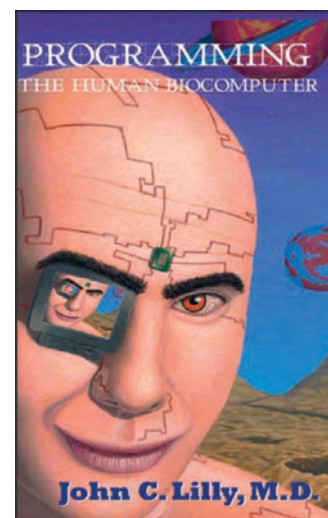
Programming the Human Biocomputer is an outline of how to self program the human psyche. Lily developed this model through the use of LSD and the modern equivalent of the isolation of the cave in the Isolation Tank. Lily presents the case that the human biocomputer is fully programmed by the time we reach adulthood, a view similar to that of Gurdjieff who saw us as machines or programmed automatons. Most of us have a limited range of programs; many are hardwired or genetically based while others are developed from reactions to the environment. Lilly offers a clear and precise outline of how we learn and calls this process meta programming. The structure has a substratum of programs, the metaprograms themselves and the I or self metaprogrammer. Lilly hypothesizes that there are probably supra metaprograms right up to a source program which we may label as the Starmaker, god or whatever.

Essentially we are general purpose computers who can program any model of the universe we like. To change our models we need to understand the parameters of the programming we have and the veracity of other models. While a basic model may be used to approximate the

physical world, the reality is that all programs can be transcended and that the mind has no limits.

To bring about internal change, we need to build a philosophical model of our internal states just as we have of our biological states. Once we appreciate that the self is a "feedback cause" with other beings we can also analyse our interpersonal states. While physical evolution and adaptation is obviously part of the equation, genetic determinism is limited due to the potential of the mind. The most significant metaprogram of all is self-analysis and this gives us the ability to change other programs and take over our own programming.

There are various levels of programs within the psyche with varying levels of flexibility. Programs in the sub cortex are built in while programs in the archeo cortex are fixed. Programs in both the neo and paleo cortex are modifiable. Lilly offers a clear flow chart which shows the various functions and the programs which





can be modified.

The art of metaprogramming is achieved through meta command language. Hypnosis and entheogens are among the most useful means to change met-

aprograms. Some programs cannot be revised, while others are more difficult and issues of reward punishment in terms of Pavlov and skinner should be considered. Since the research of Pavlov and Skinner is so significant, there is very extensive examination of their work and the two conditioning processes they uncovered and how they apply to the human condition.

When we look at the mind we need to take an integral position reconciling formal thinking processes with the unknowable and intuitive. Lily creates a model where there are eleven levels within the human biocomputer, from the most basic physical states to higher states of consciousness. Through experimentation Lily found internal programs or beings which needed to be faced and dealt with as well as the ability to go beyond the normal constraints of space time. Such exploration must be accompanied with healthy skepticism and the search for objective validation.

Language and linguistic keys can be used to explore these levels of programming as well as various chemicals. Preliminary training sessions with entheogens should be undertaken before adding isolation or other techniques, a trusted guide should be chosen and safety put first. The explorer should be aware that some programs can also be protohuman i.e. come from our earlier evolutionary heritage so reprogramming must be carefully planned.

The projection principle is how the mind can use introduced white noise in addition to the use of entheogens to create non noise elements i.e. information. Such elements can be used for reprogramming and resolving conflicts. We must be aware of evasion programs which

are programs which work to avoid metaprograms which are difficult for the metaprogrammer to face. Be analytical, use entheogens in a controlled manner and always give time for experiences to be integrated. Traditional psychiatric labels do not apply here, dangerous states can be extinguished and the deeper realms of self experienced. This is an adventurous and challenging process.



In Coalitions and Interlock Lilly gives an excellent summary of the different models of the structure of the organism and concludes the sum is more than its many parts. Lilly also explores the interactions between various aspects within and outside the individual including relationships and interspecies communication.

Lilly's exploration of reprogramming body images and expanding our health through metaprograms is still as timely as ever. Advanced metaprogramming can include working with beliefs and experiencing new horizons such as using programs so psychological barriers are dissolved. Lily goes even further and suggests that reality itself is simply an interlocking metaprogram and hence the sky is the limit. In major metaprograms Lilly looks at the primary programs which operate within each organism and how to unlock our full potential.

This is a fascinating work which has been considered a seminal text in self programming since it was first published in 1967. This new edition is more relevant today than ever in a society where we are constantly conditioned by the media, advertising and external pressures. It offers some significant suggestions for inner exploration and I am very pleased to see it republished by Ronin Publications.

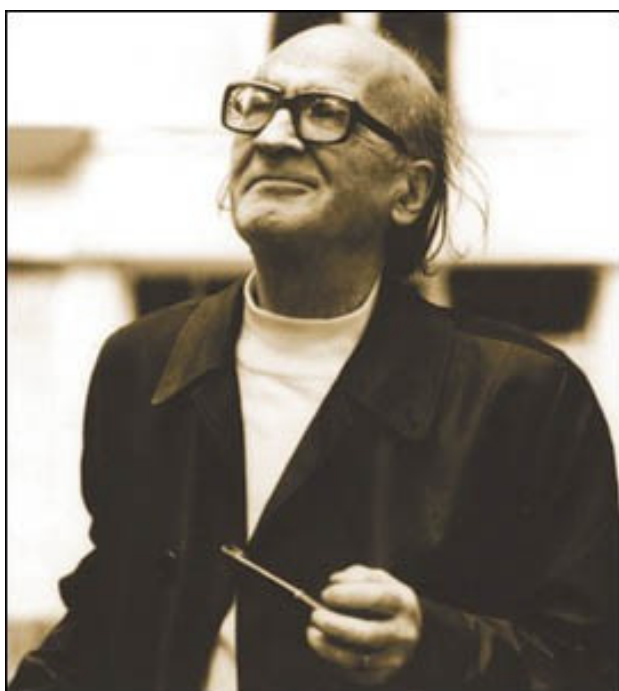
The International Eliade
Bryan Rennie, Editor
State University of New York Press, 2007

Mircae Eliade was a contentious figure in so many ways. His work offered a unique philosophical model for the study of religion which was heavily influenced by Traditionalist thought. Indeed Mark Sedgwick in his classic work of traditionalism *Against the Modern World*, sees him as a "soft traditionalist". This series of papers explore his life and work and offer a mixture of critical and sympathetic viewpoints. The book itself is divided into eight quite comprehensive sections.

I The Sacralization of Time

Michael Meslin looks at the nature of sacred time and its relation to history. According to Eliade sacred time is different to secular time, it is traditional and marked by myth, ritual and rhythm. This sacred time is eternal and exists as a mythic state which is ever present. It stands distinct from secular time and indeed calls man back to the primordial state. One of the major points of contention about this model is whether the primordial state gives meaning, a very traditionalist approach, or as Eliade's critics suggest the world and history itself is the source of meaning.

Further to this model for Eliade states that secular time is only significant inasmuch as it provides a means by which rituals can open a gate-



way to original time and accordingly history hence is a degeneration, a product of de-sacralization.

Any deep examination of Eliade's work needs to consider the relationship between myth and reality. Rather than bring critical and suspicious of myth, as many of his contemporaries, Eliade saw it as a manifestation of the numinous. The next paper in the series looks at this issue in some detail

II The Interpretation of History

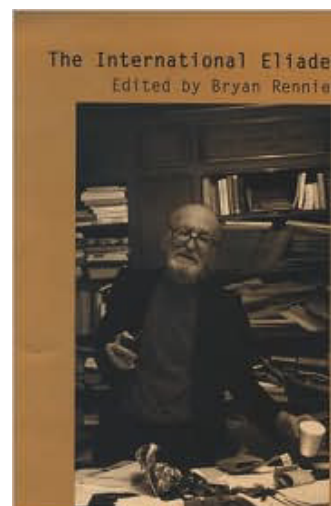
Ulrich Berner looks at the controversies surrounding Eliade and suggests that some of the problem arises because we attempt to use Eliade to explain absolutely everything. Instead he analyses Eliade's notion of archaic man as living ahistorically in a world of sacred time and space to a specific case, that of Adonis. Does Eliade's model only choose the mystical and ignore the possible rational and theological meanings of the myth? In the case of Adonis Berner thinks so. He argues that Eliade's model is not the problem but its one-sidedness is.

The next is an interesting piece on how Eliade's approach can be brought to bear on ancient Egypt. Looks at some basic critiques of Eliade's method primarily in relation to sources and then looks how a modified Eliadian approach could be applied to ancient Egypt. This is a truly fascinating look at sacred and profane, myth, symbolism and cyclic time.

Applying Eliade to the New Testament, an unusual and fascinating essay. This paper looks at the cosmic themes Eliade found in Christianity especially during his Rumanian period.

III The interpretation of India and Traditionalism

Liviu Bordag offers interesting article on the complex relationship between Eliade's ideas and those of traditionalism. Also offering some



significant historical research on Eliade and India, Sri Aurobindo and other gurus.

Natale Spinet looks at the influence of Rene Guenon, Julius Evola and Ananda Coomaraswamy in Eliade's thought. She looks at key themes and traditions tendencies and suggests differences. She also discusses various scholars' positions on Eliade's relations with traditionalism. While an interesting essay in my mind she seems to work a little too hard to play down Eliade's traditionalist leanings. She spends an inordinate amount of time debunking each scholar who suggests Eliade was a traditionalist. It seems too often scholars still want to distance Eliade from the Traditionalist approach which quite clearly informed his personal spiritual worldview and his work.

IV History and Historicism

This is a challenging paper looking at how Eliade interpreted at history and the sort of historicism he rejected, for example Marxism. It also examines the criticisms levelled at Eliade over his historical view.

V The history of Religions

Katrine Ore looks at the contentious issues of gender in Eliade's work on religion.

VI The Dialectic of the Sacred and Creative Hermeneutics

We now deep into Eliade's work, looking at what is religion, what does it refer to and how do we interpret it.

VII Mysticism and the Orthodox tradition

Wilhelm Danca offers insightful look at Eliade's mysticism with a focus on three aspects – The Romanian period under influence of Nae Ionescu, Eliades own development of mysticism and the language of mystical experience.

VIII Eliade's Fiction

This section including essays and discussions of the fact behind the fiction since Eliade regularly expressed his spiritual ideas through fictional works.

Gods of the Runes: The Divine Shapers of Fate

Frank Joseph
Bear and Co. 2010

Gods of the Runes is a very different sort of book on the runes. Joseph does away with what he considers to be Christian titles which sees as Christian accretions and focuses on the deities he believes are connected to each rune. He explores these with legends and stories, gemstones, astrological signs and related historical information. Each of the runes is illustrated with full page illustrations by Ian Daniels which are certainly eye catching.

The first section of the book covers a history of divination in generation with a solid focus on the nature of the tarot. As Joseph introduces the runes he focuses on the Elder Futhark and comes to the conclusion that the 24 runes symbolize the 24 hours of the day and are related to the 12 houses of the zodiac. These theories seem to originate with Karl Theodore Weigel



Viking Rune Master from North America

who Joseph regularly references and who sees the flow of the runes as representing the course of the seasons.

Joseph outlines the Norse creation story, the development of Yggdrasil and offers a very informative history of the runes. He argues that they can even be traced back to the Upper Palaeolithic Age where at least eight pre runic symbols have been found which are the same as later runes. He continues this exploration of the earliest history of the runes and presents a very solid case for their very early origin. Joseph then makes connections between the Vedic system of Kundalini and the Chakras and the runes.

Each of the runes is discussed in some detail and the use of storytelling to reveal their nature is novel and creative. Joseph also provides historical references, tidbits of symbolism and other relevant references. His choice of deities for the runes is highly speculative and thought provoking, it is a little hard to get a handle on the way in which major and very minor deities are mixed together in the system and certainly the astrological attributions are unusual in terms of more traditional runic systems.

At the same times the runes are a dynamic system, while drawing on the past they change according to wyrd and take on new forms of expression. Accordingly this unusual and speculative system may hold many secrets and is certainly worth considering. It just may be that Joseph has found something quite unique about the runes and their use in the modern world.

The book ends with an extensive section on divination by the runes.



Odin

Social and Political Thought of Julius Evola
Paul Furlong
Routledge (2011)

"Western civilisation needs a complete overhaul or it will fall apart one day or another.

"It has realised the most complete perversion of any rational order of things.

"Reign of matter, of gold, of machine, of number, it no longer possesses breath, or liberty, or light.

"The West has lost the sense of command and obedience.

"It has lost the sense of Action and of Contemplation.

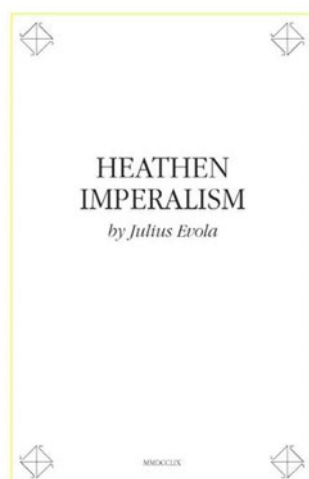
"It has lost the sense of hierarchy, of spiritual power, of magods."

Julius Evola, Heathen Imperialism

The Social and Political Thought of Julius Evola is the latest title in the Routledge Studies in Extremism and Democracy series. It is a title which attempts to explore Evola in a systematic way examining in comprehensive detail his social and political thought and its philosophical foundations. I personally have some misgivings with such a limited approach to his work.

Evola was essentially a man of Tradition, his approach was marked by an intense spiritual vision grounded in various esoteric traditions including Hermeticism, Tantra and others. He was non, if not anti, Christian and had a strong pagan influence throughout his work. He argued from a point of principle rather than from a political or social idea and hence I am not sure you can study his work with such limited parameters.

His approach to politics and social issues extended from this spiritual worldview, indeed his politics were essentially pragmatic, he would work with any political system if he believed it could be moved towards being an expression of Tradition.



I am not convinced it is possible to truly understand Evola without understanding his esoteric and religious views as well.

While Furlong offers an excellent exploration of Evola's concept of Magical Idealism and does discuss his views on paganism in terms of his work *Heathen Imperialism* (aka *Pagan Imperialism*) I still believe too much emphasis is placed on the political and social rather than the esoteric. Granted that it is the title of the book and it defines its place within the Routledge series however I still believe it reduces the uniqueness of his vision to that of social and political issues alone which were only one small aspect of his work. It is from this error that Furlong, for example, posits that Evola wrote certain works in reaction to the development of Fascism while from another perspective he was simply fashioning the perennial wisdom in a modern idiom. I also find the use of loaded terms annoying racism and anti-Semitism especially. They are terms which have very little meaning and can be distorted and used as weapons in any ideological argument. Evola certainly believed that resonances of the spiritual took place in the physical and hence biology had some role in the nature of humanity but it was not in the prime position. To use terms such as racism repeatedly I believe reduces our

ability to engage with Evola's work in an open manner.

Furlong's section on Magical Idealism is extremely challenging and significant. While Furlong places it within the context of the idealist and philosophical movements of the time for those interested in esotericism it certainly has a deeper meaning. Magical Idealism posits the ability to construct an internal subjective world that can be used to forge the true individual. This concept has much in common with various heterodox forms of mysticism such as the use of the Imaginal in Sufism by Henry Corbin and in more modern times the philosophical underpinnings of the Left Hand Path. The relationship between Magical Idealism and Evola's Left Hand Path Tantrism remain unexplored (since they are outside the parameters of this book) but are worth considering.

Central to Evola's approach is the warrior ethic. While Rene Guenon and the Traditionalist school he represented emphasized the priestly and the contemplative, Evola focused on the path of the warrior and action. While Guenon emphasized abstract knowledge Evola places being over knowledge as a path within itself.

He argued for a Western ethos which he saw as having a Hyperborean origin, he also saw the Greek warrior culture as having a Nordic origin. Evola rejected Christianity as it replaced the heroic with an insipid form of contemplative ethic. While Guenon saw the foundation of the medieval period in the Church, Evola saw it based on the strength of the Holy Roman Empire and its warrior chivalric values. While some chivalric values survived within Christianity these were incidental and did not justify the overarching destructive effect of it as a whole.

For Rene Guenon religious transmission had to occur via a living faith with intact external forms and practise, hence leading to Guenon's embracing of Islam. For Evola initiation comes via a spiritual transmission which can be individually located in esotericism and applied through a totally individual heroic path.

When this model is applied to political structures, they should only exist as an externalization of the transcendent principle. Accordingly they will naturally be hierarchical with all other forms such as communism, capitalism and democracy being *caput mortuum* or alchemical or



chemical dross.

Central to the warrior ethic is the society of men or *Mannerbund*, who are separated from family by rites of passage and become the foundation of the warrior class which is also known as second caste (*Kshatriya*) in the Vedic system. When the heroic class is bypassed by the *demos*: both socialist and democratic we know the Kali Yuga is upon us. As this degenerative cycle takes place warriors are replaced with paid soldiers and artisans with tradespeople.

It should be clear from this model that there is an innate inequality of man. Evola explains this through "multiple state of being" where the spiritual essence resonates through the character into the physical. Hence man is a complex of soul, character and biology and by his nature is marked by various degrees of dignity, rights and responsibilities.

At the same time totalitarianisms of all shades fail as they attempt to replace the organic hierarchy of being with an artificial bureaucracy. While Evola may have worked with the fascists and National Socialists this was from a nuanced position of metaphysic principle and cannot be reduced to bland racism or nationalism, both of which he criticized. Even Ancient Rome for example, which he highly admired, was not significant in itself but inasmuch that it embodied a form of tradition expressed in pagan form.

Absolutist monarchies such as that which triggered the French Revolution are little different from totalitarianisms in that they ruled by fear rather than expressing the organic hierarchy grounded in a transcendent principle. The nation state is the final stage of such a degeneration i.e. rule by *demos* or peasants. At the same

time Evola differentiates between the nation state and the state which exists within Traditional society. The nation state infers a materialistic and base concept of political identity while Evola sees the nation as originated from another plane altogether.

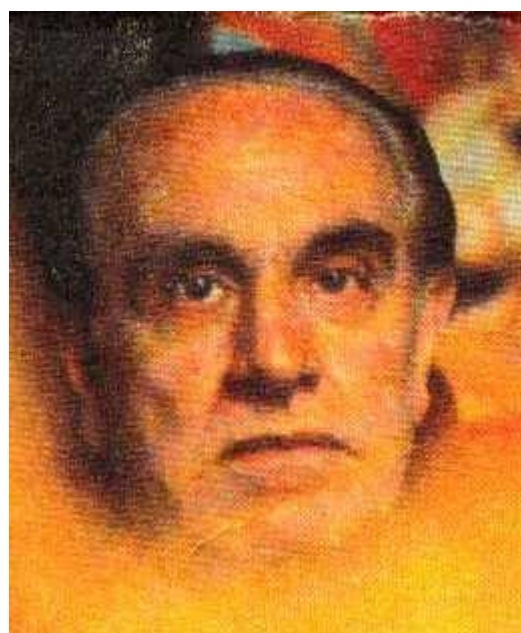


Corneliu Codreanu

As with Corneliu Codreanu he argued a nation must have a form, vital force and spirit. This form Evola later comes to call aristocratic nationalism.

Political action is based on the dynamic interaction between the desire for detachment and transcendence and the need for political action. Since fascism and National Socialism could not be reformed, post war Evola argued for a new class of warriors and a new form of action.

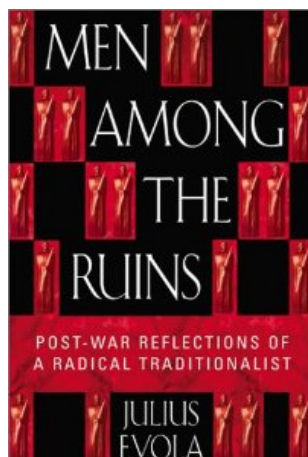
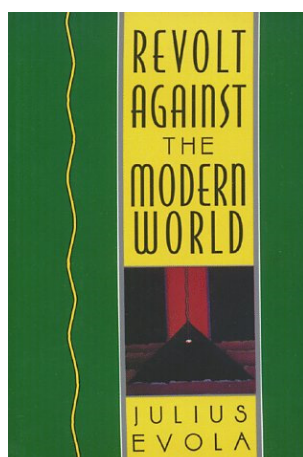
This was not a political party since all current political and social systems are in a state of decay. For Evola there are no longer any external supports for the traditional man whether in spirituality or action and hence in *Revolt Against the Modern World* and *Men among the Ruins* he provides orientations for how the warrior can survive. We should not prolong nor defend the modern system, indeed we should know if and when to attack to accelerate its demise. Our pri-



mary goal should be to hold to our principles and make sure contamination with modernity is avoided. In many ways this advice resonates with Krishna's message to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita.

Evola's views on race, monotheism including Judaism and sexuality cannot be reduced to knee-jerk claims to racism, anti-Semitism and sexism. I do take issue with Furlongs regular use of the term racism and his desire to somehow make Evola take personal responsibility for the Holocaust and the racial violence of the Nazis. This form of political correctness erodes an otherwise insightful work. At the same time he does explain how Evola's views on race are complex and nuanced and emanate from a spiritual traditional view and biology is the least significant aspect of the equation. His discussion of gender and Evola's views on sexuality and women is somewhat complicated by the fact that Evola primarily saw sexuality, both socially and personally, from an esoteric and Left Hand Path Tantric perspective and since these subjects are outside the parameters of Furlong's work it makes commentary on Evola's sexual worldview difficult and inaccurate.

This is a complex book with many limitations and difficulties. I am still unsure you can study the social and political views of Evola alone without studying his esotericism and spirituality. At the same time the exposition of Magical Idealism and discussions of many of the philosophical aspects of Evola's works are useful and informative.



The Timeless Relevance of Traditional Wisdom **M. Ali Lakhani** **World Wisdom Books**

The Timeless Relevance of Traditional Wisdom is a fascinating and insightful selection of articles on from Traditional journal Sacred Web. It focuses on the timeliness of the timeless i.e. the role of Traditionalism within the modern world.

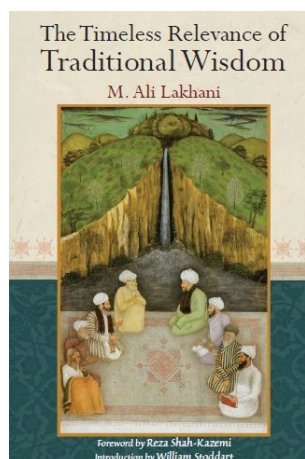
The work opens by exploring the nature of Traditionalism and argues for the term Perennialism as Traditionalism tends to sound nostalgic and ignores the vigour that the tradition really possesses. Lakhani discusses how it is not our task to yearn for the past but to transmit the timeless wisdom in this difficult age (The Kali Yuga).

There is a good overview of the nature of Perennialism, the major figures in the school such as Rene Guenon and Frithjof Schuon and discussions of other figures such as Ananda Coomaraswamy and Titus Burckhardt.

The structure of the book covers editorials from Sacred Web, significant metaphysical essays and key reviews.

All of the essays emphasize the way in which the Perennial wisdom can be followed and applied in the present age and its engagement with modernism.

The editorials open with a succinct discussion of the Traditional worldview and its key differences from modernity. While modernism is anthropocentric, the Perennial wisdom is centred on the divine and according these two models approach the world from two totally different vantage points. One seems knowledge as a gift to be treasured, the other as a faculty to be exploited. While Traditionalism does not reject reason or sense perception it just appreciates that it is only valid within very limited frames of reference.



There is a good balance of metaphysical pieces with discussions of the ramifications of holding a Perennialist position in the modern world. There are some fascinating discussions on the flaws of pluralism and how freedom requires an ontological basis. Fundamentalism is given a traditionalist critique and a balanced view is offered of the post 9/11 ideological conflicts. Lakhani offers a solid definition of the Perennialist worldview and responds to the criticism of Umberto Eco who tries to create a causative link between Traditionalist views and fascist politics.

M. Ali Lakhani has a marvellous turn of phrase and an ability to communicate the Perennial vision with a clarity and clearness of language. Whether he is engaging with secularism or outlining the key motifs of Schuon's work he brings new insights to the subject at hand. His extensive study of the aesthetics of poetry in light of the Perennial wisdom is nothing short of astounding. He also offers insightful aspects of various aspects of Islam in relation to the universal vision of the Perennial wisdom.

His reviews not only introduce us to some interesting authors but again clarify key Traditionalist ideas.

The Timeless Relevance of Traditional Wisdom is a significant work, filled to the brim with challenging essays of varying sizes. There are so many essays which shine a clear light on the failures of modernism while at the same time showing the way to following the path of Tradition in the Kali Yuga.



SACRED WEB
A JOURNAL OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY

Web: <http://www.sacredweb.com/>

The Brain that Changes Itself Madman R4 DVD

Traditionally the brain was seen as an organ that developed like most others in the human body, when it reached a certain age it was pretty well unchangeable. This view was the orthodox scientific view since the very earliest days of medicine and meant that when a brain injury occurred little could be done and sadly little was attempted.

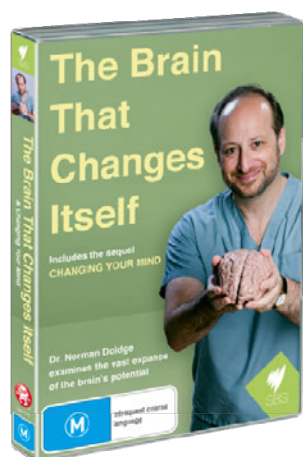
It also meant that it was believed that when a person started to lose focus later in life there was little that could be done about that either, so many elderly people were left mentally decaying with little action taken. Medications and other forms of interventions were sometimes attempted but with too few successful results.

The Brain that Changes Itself documents a new paradigm that has arisen in brain research known as brain plasticity or neuroplasticity. Essentially this means that the brain can be retrained (not without some hardwork) if damaged and if it is losing focus. If standard pathways to the brain are not working, then new ones can be formed and through a range of techniques the brain can be modified to use its many unused regions to "take up the slack".

The example given in the book is that if the brain uses major highways, if these are blocked or damaged, we can take backroads or even create a cross country path to get where need to go. The more these new paths are used the more successful they become.

These studies began in the Sixties and have had immense changes to the way in which stroke victims and those with brain injuries or damage are treated.

The medical establishment was slow to catch on due to the sheer radicalness of the proposal. The concept of the static brain was the foundation of the basic approach to so many diseases that this new paradigm, with wildly successful



results, came as quite a shock.

At the same time this discovery has far more significant ramifications that purely in the medical field. If the brain can be trained it can be kept in an optimum state and the documentary discusses a range of techniques for keeping the brain "taut and trim" even into old age. Such techniques can also be used for those with mind fog caused by medication, learning difficulties and forms of autism.

There are now a wide range of brain training programs available in print, on DVD and online which can be used and have proven effectiveness, rather than using medication it does seem exercising the brain like a muscle is the way to go. There are now schools using these techniques to assist children with learning disorders and many people are using online courses to keep their minds in shape. This is a superb DVD which educates us about the latest research in brain plasticity and challenges us to use our brains – "if you don't use it, you'll lose it". It also includes the sequel *Changing your Mind*.

At the same time for those versed in esotericism and the schools of the Fourth Way, this DVD just goes to confirm that it is possible to break our genetic and social conditioning and transform ourselves into anything we want to be. While this seems like a very new idea, esoteric schools have been suggesting it for millennia, nice to see science catching up !

The Brain that Changes Itself is also available as a book, written by Norman Doidge and published by Penguin, it was a New York Times bestseller.

The Initiate

Issue 2

Arkto Publishing

Web: [Http://www.arktos.com](http://www.arktos.com)

The Initiate is a well presented journal of Traditional studies, it is around 130 pages, published irregularly and a joy to read.

It opens with a challenging discussion of the dangers of ideals becoming ideology. It can easily be seen how the ideal of social justice, an admirable concern, ended up as the ideology of socialism with all its related destructive consequences. At the same time we must be very aware of the danger of this happening to Traditionalism and must consider how to live Traditionalism in the modern world in a way that doesn't simply end up as naval gazing or endless intellectualism.

The first article begins with the traditionalism of Bhakti as found in the Srimad Bhagavatam and presents the first in a series based on this tradition.

Sergio Knipe takes a fascinating look at the cyclic view of history but not in the conventional sources such as the Vedic or Hesiod but in the Egyptian. This is an exciting look at the cyclic view of history in a different context and he further his examination by considering a Hermetic text and finally a Coptic Christian one. This is certainly an impressive piece of work.

Robert bullion introduces us to the new world of neo monasticism from a traditionalist viewpoint. He gives us a truly extensive background examining the fall of Rome and the rise of various monastic traditions such as the Egyptian. He considers in some detail Celtic neo monasticism which seems to have arisen spontaneously when the Romans left Britain and Ireland was essentially severed from the Christian west. He then continues to consider more modern forms include the community formed by Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Taize community.

He then takes a surprising turn and looks at the national anarchist movement which advocates a form of volkisch neo monasticism and various radical traditionalist groups who are also exploring this approach within their own unique way.

Charles Upton explores Sufism, knowledge and love, examining the various forms of knowledge and the way in which love is understood in both Sufism and Traditionalism.

David Griffiths offers us a fascinating and objective history of the world of witchcraft, examining social elements of the witch trials and cunning men. He then consider various theories which surround the history of witchcraft including feminist exaggerations about the numbers of women killed and the distortions of Margaret Murray, Charles Godfrey Leland and James Frazer.

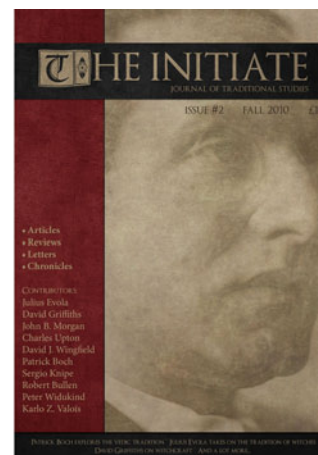
This is a superbly well researched, well referenced and informative essay. Griffiths argues persuasively that modern wicca is based is the fanciful theories of Murray, Leland and James Frazer and suggests that historically real witchcraft simply referred to magical practice not to some form of feminist paganism.

This is followed by a marvellous short piece by Julius Evola discussing his on meeting with Gerald Gardner and his scepticism over the claims of Wicca as a living link in a chain to primordial goddess worship cults, as usual Evola cuts to the chase.

There is a good selection of essays with a high level of discussion and debate and a good selection of book reviews.

Peter Widukind then takes us on a journey through magic and music with reference to science, psychology and magick. This is followed by a series of music reviews.

The Initiate Volume 2 ends with the challenging war protocol similar to the samurai codes of Japan but adapted for the Traditionalist in the modern world.



The Journal of Contemporary Heathen Thought

Issue 1

Web: <http://www.heathenjournal.com/>

The Journal of Contemporary Heathen Thought is an impressive production aimed at exploring the world of modern heathenry in an informed and erudite manner. Its expressed aim is to encourage the expansion of Heathen thought into the domains of theology, philosophy, sociology, psychology and other disciplines that have yet to be thoroughly examined by Heathenry or any other form of European polytheism. It offers a wide range of essays and poetry as well as a selection of book reviews and an interview with Sonne Hagal.

It open with *Why am I a heathen ?* Which brings up some significant issues in relation to identity and spirituality. A heathen in northern lands would not have seen him or herself as having a religion; culture, spirituality, ecology and ethnicity would have simply been part of an integral whole. It is would have been about who you were not what you believed and today this is something we need to regain. Heathenism begins with the natural world and celebrates science but also accepts that there is more to the universe than senses posit. Heathenism is our connection to language and place and this is in direct opposition to the quite alien values expressed in the desert religions with their absolutist morality.

This is followed by a significant essay examining the hot issue of race within heathenry. Borthwick offers an excellent comparison of the difference between a volkisch worldview and a racist one. While each people have their own ancestral traditions this does not automatically assume some form of ranking. He also offers the insightful comment that there is not a small amount of the Jewish and Christian chosen people myth within the racial worldview.

Henry Lauer then offers a superb philosophical journey into cognitive bias and the way in which many grand pagan theories have been created due to logical errors. You find what you look for and Marija Gimbutas and Metzner are classic examples. He continues on to consider how dualistic thinking from Christianity has been imported into much heathen thought especially in regards to the Jotuns Vs the Aesir.

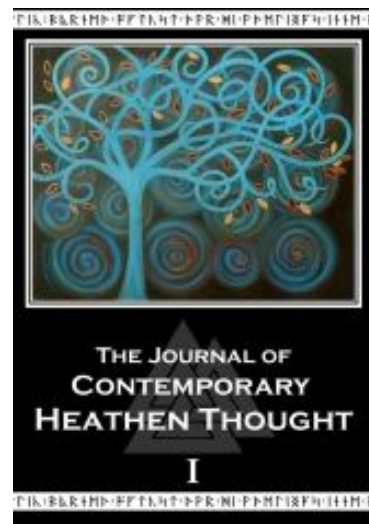
There are many nice poems with artwork and some intriguing essays on gardening and herbs in the northern tradition, including an essay on plants, hexes and plants as spirit beings and as intentional agents.

The feminine in the post modern age is certainly a controversial and provocative piece. While I certainly agree with the dangers of feminism, to suggest it is more damaging than Christianity is a bit of a stretch. That being said this exploration of gender roles, family and the folk is thought provoking.

The significance of shamanism in Asatru is so often ignored, yet really is the key to understanding of Odins quest for the runes. Through Shamanism or Seidr we can gain direct and personal access to the nine worlds and its denizens and this is a challenging discussion of its significance.

Alain de Benoist explores the innate tolerance of early European paganism and the innate violence of monotheism. He traces this back to the very earliest forms of Judaism and their tribal massacres and religious wars and gives more than abundant proof of the dangerous of monotheistic thought.

An interpretation of Germanic mythology is a great essay. It allows the Eddas to speak for themselves working to unlock the gnosis hidden in mythic and symbolic form. It opens with a fascinating discussion of the role Loki took in the creation of human consciousness and continues examining the battle between the Vanir and Aesir. He considers the significance of Heimdall, Odin and his trickery to gain the sacred mead of Hvasir, Odins sacrifice for the runes, Baldur and many related mythic explorations. It offers and insightful commentary with new and challenging interpretations



Quarterly Review
Ideas, Culture and
Current affairs
Volume 4.3
Autumn 2010

Quarterly Review offers an excellent range of thought provoking interviews, articles and reviews. It covers a diverse range of subjects and always includes informed and intelligent debate on current issues. The sheer breadth of the content in each issue is impressive and it certainly demands to be read cover to cover.

Some of the contents which grabbed my personal attention include...

An interesting interview with the maverick Ron Paul, an American republican senator with a libertarian orientation who offers his reflections on the gold standard and social issues. He is unusual in that he is an anti-war conservative and believes that the drug war is useless and drug issues are a medical not legal issue.

Kenneth Royce Moore conjures the polis of Magnesia according to Plato and asks what it teaches us about today's democracy. It offers us some fascinating challenges and some clear warnings.

Peter Stark looks at the culture of the bullfight and it's banning in 2012 in Catalonia. This is a truly absorbing retrospective looking at bullfighting in European history from the earliest period. Robert Graves suggested bullfighting was introduced into Spain in the first century C.E. when Emperor Claudius banned gladiatorial fights and from there Stark moves back through history to earliest sources, myth, legend, cult and religion.

Ronald Granieri looks at the state of American higher education. He offers an insightful analysis of both left and right problems and sees how too often real education has been replaced with too many utilitarian subjects focused on practical results or with postmodernism. He suggests there is a need for a system that really breeds



intellectual curiosity.

Mark Brennan looks at the illusion of economic equality. In a solid critique of *The Spirit Level: Why equality is better for everybody* by Wilkinson and Pickett he considers the whole in their analysis and considers a range of other possible interpretations they see to deliberately ignore in the quest to present their own Marxist oriented solutions.

Frank Ellis in the Death Wish in das Reich examines *Suicide in Nazi Germany* by Christian Goeschel, a truly bleak work which considers the nature of suicide before, during and after WWII. He discusses the possible motives for the increase in suicides and includes excerpts from suicide notes.

Jonathan Paquette looks at *Gods Philosophers: How the Medieval world laid the Foundations of Modern Science* by James Hannam. This is a challenging revisionist work which dismantles much of the current model of the medieval period and shows how not only science and academia flourished but through a study of key figures shows that there was no conflict between them.

Sonya Jay Porter offers a superb historical essay which looks at the role of women in Anglo Saxon society. Rather than being unwashed savages, the Anglo Saxons had contracts and laws which show a well-developed understanding of the need to protect the rights of women and children.

Under king Aethelbert, for example, if a woman walked out a marriage with the children she automatically had a right to half the property, a very modern concept indeed.

Quarterly Review
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Quarterly Review once again comes up with a range of informed and challenging articles and reviews.

The editorial looks at the debates about free trade caused by the financial crisis and how both the left and the conservatives are coming to question the value of untrammelled capitalism.

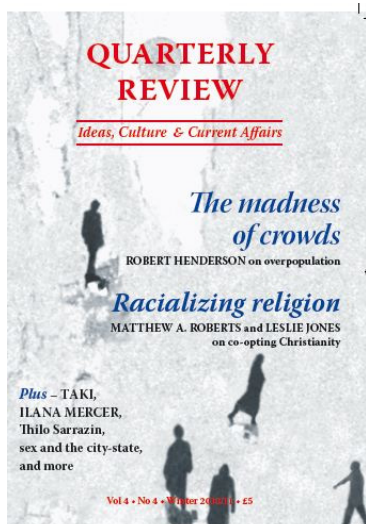
Matthew Roberts discusses the new face of Christianity. He suggests that we can no longer identify Christianity with western forms since now the majority of Christians are in the third.

This form of non-western, if not at times anti-western, Christianity is evolving its own characteristics especially in Africa.

Robert Henderson looks at the two biggest global threats - third world overpopulation and industrialization. While overpopulation is often seen only as a general third world issue, it is also a Chinese issue, since the punishment for more than one child is a fine with the increasing income in china this becoming a simple formality. When you add this population increase to India and other countries the situation is grave. The combination of third world overpopulation and industrialization is the primary cause of global warming not changes in the first world.

Kenneth Royce Moore examines Plato's view on women as discussed in the Laws. His utopia Magnesia has a very liberated view of women including women in the military and socialized healthcare and education. While Plato's philosophy still puts men first in the political arena, women are still offered far more equality. Moore also examines the myths of the amazons as female warriors.

Frank Ellis looks at Thilo Sarrazin a banker who honestly expressed his views on the situation in Germany and suffered in the media for it. As Sarrazin notes multiculturalism in Germany as in most countries is a failed experiment. I especially like Sarrazin's statement that Germany is Germany due to the virtue of its inhabitants and their living intellectual as well as cultural traditions. Without the people it would merely be a geographical term. Sarrazin's book which in English means Germany consigns itself to oblivion is a brutally honest appraisal of not only the



danger in Germany but the dangers to the west of such things as mass migration, aging populations and higher IQ women not having children. Personally I cannot wait for Thilo Sarrazin's book to be translated in English and more widely distributed it clearly has a lot of significant things to say.

Derek Turner looks at Archeofuturism by Guillaume Faye and is not as excited about it as we are (it was reviewed in our last issue). In many ways. In many ways I can understand his criticisms Archeofuturism assumes a lot. It assumes you understand the state of the planet and already have a background in current economic, social and environmental crises. It also assumes you understand the nature of the French New Right. Without these contexts it can be a disorienting read. At the same time I do believe it is worth persevering with. Sure, many conservatives or Third way readers will find his paganism challenging, but with Faye I must agree that Christianity is a spent force and has a destructive influence on the Western psyche.

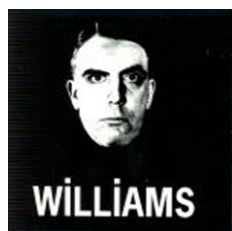
Edward Dutton is more than disconcerting by the book 10 books every conservative must read by Benjamin Wiker and makes it clear why. Which clearly a conservative title Wiker seems to think that only people of his religious club can be conservatives. While offering an interesting commentary he distorts science in his discussion of Darwinian evolution. In the end Dutton sees Wiker as confusing conservatism with reactionaryism and offering a stagnant view of culture. The difference between conservatism or what could be defined as "counter revolutionary thinking" and reactionary thought is something which is sadly lacking in many discussions of the rising trend of conservatism especially in America.

In Taki's universe Taki pines for the days of good manners and reminds us of the revolting habits of the cult of celebrity and undeserved wealth.

Ilana Mercer looks at Julian Assange and the job he is doing exposing government corruption and incompetency and wonders why such an act should be so violently attacked.

Web: <http://www.quarterly-review.org/>

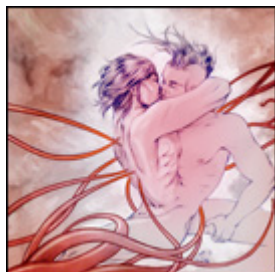
**The Appeal of
Discarded Orthodoxy:
A Tribute to David E.
Williams
Old Europe Café**



The Appeal of Discarded Orthodoxy: : A Tribute to David E. Williams features thirty eight interpretations of the work of David E. Williams divided into Pop and Folk and Contra Pop and Folk presented on two CDs in gatefold digipak with a portrait of Mr Williams on the cover.

David E Williams produces songs that stick with you for a long time; they have disturbing and dark lyrics presented over melancholic yet skilled musical forms. His first CD arrived in 1998 in the form of the Pseudo Erotica EP and he has continued to produce challenging and interesting work ever since. In my mind it is quite a shame he is not as well known as he should be and I always find his new work intriguing if not sometimes disconcerting. Tribute CD's can be a difficult "animal" to review, with so many contributors with different styles many are rather mediocre. Not so this compilation. The contributors to this CD have obviously all been influenced, one way or another, by Williams strange and enigmatic work. There is a wide range of styles each exploring the songs by Williams in different formations and presentations. In any tribute some versions will be better than others, but I was surprised by the general quality of all of the songs and innovative quality of so many of the interpretations of Williams work. This is an impressive and intriguing work which becomes more and more haunting at each listening.

**Chemism
Black Sun Productions
Old Europe Café**



Chemism is the "mutual attraction, interpenetration, and neutralisation of independent individuals which unite to form a whole".

Before you even listen to this album you are struck by the amazing imagery. The covers feature quite explicit but beautiful images presented in a cartoon style of male-male love. The images have a strong mystical orientation; the one

on the cover has all manner of veins connecting the lovers together which link to a heart on the back cover. The image on the right inside cover shows one lover melting into another and holding his partners heart in his hand. This focus on passionate same sex union, perhaps even self-love (the image behind the CD itself shows two men who look the same) is reflected in the esoteric lyrics of the album itself.

Massimo & Pierce aka Anarcocks have produced a very personal album which is both hypnotic and seductive. The album is primarily atmospheric and ambient using vocals as a form of instrument with samples, spoken word and chants. There is occasionally singing as well. This is an album of highly intensity, the passion shown in the imagery is matched by the desire and intensity of the music. It is like some sort of evocation which uses creates an atmosphere which possesses the listener. Time uncaptured has a repetitive dreamlike beat, overlaid with voices and melody, it quickly envelopes you with its textured vision. As layer on layer is added the track becomes more and more trance-like.

Dies Juvenalis continues the theme adding a Middle Eastern sound which takes you deeper and deeper into the dream with flourishes of sound and texture.

The *Repossession of Innocence* moves into dark territory with haunting voices and a more resilient and stronger beat. *Chemism* continues the darker sound with chants and dissonant sounds and textures. *Criminal Childhood* is a track which will not leave your mind quickly, its samples, voices and textures touch the unconscious in a way that it hard to ignore. "Please help me to realize my dream". *Clear Skies & Dark Skies* is an awe inspiring track, combining electro, a throbbing beat and great but strange lyrics, moving through different moods and visions with ease, while *Self Love* has a visceral beat which grabs you by the throat and doesn't let go. *Uncle Billy* has a more traditional vocal over a simple beat and an evocative solo violin, it is moving homage to William Burroughs.

This movement through different sorts of vision, light and dark, frenetic and filled with space makes this a very alluring experience. It is music so easy to become lost in. It is an album you will explore time and time again.

Web: <http://www.oldeuropacafe.com/>

Folk Soul

Odinic Rite Media

Web: <http://www.odinic-rite.org>

Web: <http://www.odinic-rite.org/ormedia/>

Folk Soul is the second compilation from Odinic Rite Media. It brings together fifteen unique tracks by fourteen different artists covering a wide variety of styles and tastes.

The aim of these albums is to bring Odinism to a wider audience through the medium of music and this is certainly a goal well achieved in this selection.

Personally I see Odinism as a faith of the blood, a tradition passed down from our ancestors and hence it is far more than just words and ideas. Music was always significant to our people and to express the old ways in a new and contemporary form is a real achievement.

Music has a visceral power that can reach beyond the written word reminding us of the call of blood and kin.

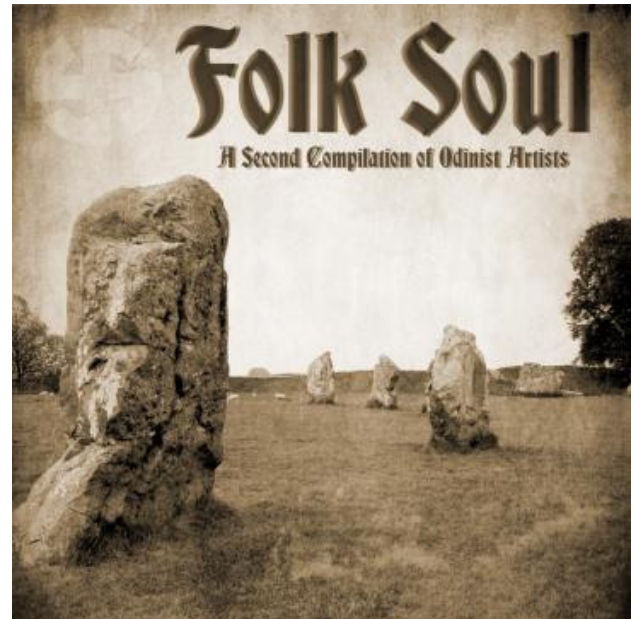
The album opens with a truly evocative track *Hjoggum Vér Með Hjörvi* by Adalruna. It is rousing, musically complex, martial and inspiring; it is a great way to open a compilation.

Gods and Men by Ansund is a simple folk song which is both resonant and poignant. *El Vassel* by Sceafa Theud is an intriguing track. They have an experimental folk/electronic sound which is modern and ancient at the same time! The deep voices resonate deep down in my soul when I listen to this track.

Gather Round (Folk of Mine) by Susan Marsden is a change of pace, a reflective folk track accompanied by flute, clapping and a simple melody which will play over in your mind for some time after.

Of Valor and Glory by Ethereal Forest is a heavier track with a strong sound and a strident message. *Heir to the Woodland Throne* by Vorgum. Usually a black metal band, Vorgum have produced an instrumental track of intense beauty.

Onward to Valhalla by Volksieg opens with a bagpipe and slowly layers sounds to create a textured experience which is part rite part, you



will want to howl with the wolves by the time the track ends,

English Power by Ansund is a call to arms, a reminder of the traditions and heritage that runs in the veins of the Englishman. A Hail to Odin with samples clearly expressing the beliefs of the Odinist as opposed to the inanities of internationalism.

Ragnorak by Death Army is a metal track with a neo classical overlay with a superb chant-like voice track. Death Army is an Italian folk metal with a unique sound which mixes metal, rock, folk, neo classical sounds into quite a powerful blend yet with a traditional message.

Inanngard by Lee James is a melodic folk track, I certainly enjoy the way this album moves between different genres of music and offers us a range of styles and presentations. *Return of the Silvatici* by Gravewright is an instrumental track with an impressive electronic ambient sound and excellent reoccurring motifs.

The Spirit Call by Gabriel is a country style folk song reminding us of the problems of modern life. *Miri it is* by Cynewolf is beautiful medieval folk song celebrating Yule.

Vanadis Hall by Hildr Valkyrie, a powerful track from a one-woman band, she has an amazing voice and her presence is felt throughout her music.

The final track *Andvari's Gold/Sigurd and Fafnir* by Hrymir's Kettle completes this amazing album with a mythic folk tale by Hrymir's Kettle.

An earlier compilation Folk Spirit is also still available and worth getting hold of.



**Sieben
Star Wood
Brick Firmament**

There is a beauty in simplicity and this album offers a superbly pure form of sound. It features the mellow and folkish voice of Matt Howden and offers layers of simple yet brilliant music.



The lyrics are poignant and the musical style ranges from neo classical to folk and occasionally tracks which are more up tempo even pop.

There is an intriguing range of songs from the reflective *Donald* to the emotive *We Wait for Them*. *Long Live The Post Romantic Empire* has a dark, moody even gothic feel, it is a truly marvellous track.

Build you a Song is a much more subtle song with the looped percussion and violin. The violin throughout this album certainly grabs your attention and reminds you of how creative this artist truly is.

The last two songs on the album *There* and *We Wait* have been mixed by Dark-Hearted and bring a surprising techno pop sound to a number of Howden's tracks.

Star Wood Brick Firmament is an album of experimental folk which grabs your attention from the very first song and grows on you with every listening.

Web: <http://www.matthowden.com/>

**Weihan
Symphonies of
Divination
Old Europe Café**

Weihan hail from Flanders (North Belgium) and offer us a superbly dark and neo classical exploration of the Germanic world. While made electronically it has a strong orchestral sound which is atmospheric and expressive.



I enjoyed their earlier album *Galder* which had a strong neo-folk feel, this album has a more martial orientation which is powerfully evocative. The themes on this album with warm the hearts of Living Traditions readers : Heathenism, Traditionalism, the Kali Yuga and Nietzsche. What is especially nice is the truly comprehensive booklet included in the evocatively designed digipack. There are explanation and quotes which give a basic introduction to the ideas behind each song. It is nice to have the context of the music as you experience it.

The vocals are strong, cold and narrative; sung mainly in English but sometimes in other languages. I found this album a remarkable experience, a "revolt against the modern world" in musical form. There are tracks dedicated to our own inner strength as we stand against modernism, reminders of the sacredness of blood, a musical expression of the kali Yuga and various tracks on Runic and Odinist subjects. *Murder of the Soul* makes the risk of following the Christian faith all too clear while *To Die for the Fatherland* and *Battle on the Wingrid Plain* are a real call to arms. This is a limited edition release of 540 copies and is quite outstanding.

Web: <http://www.oldeuropacafe.com/>



